August 29, 1936

5¢ a copy

Collier's

THE NATIONAL WEEKLY

E. Phillips Oppenheim's new novel

The Dumb Gods Speak

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NEVER AGAIN!

ONLY SILVERTOWNS HAVE THIS LIFE-SAVING TIRE INVENTION

Wife: "What fools we were to take chances on tires."

Husband: "Never again! This blow-out should teach us both a good lesson."

* * *

One blow-out is usually enough to cure any motorist of tire gambling. That ear-splitting BANG as your tire bursts open—that helpless feeling as your car zig-zags over the road, out of control, are just a few of the horrors that you'll never care to experience a second time.

Why tires blow out

In a nutshell, here's why hardly a day passes without cars being wrecked, motorists being killed or injured in blow-out accidents.

Today's speeds of 40—50—60 miles an hour generate terrific heat *inside* the tire. Rubber and fabric begin to separate. A blister forms and grows bigger and BIGGER. No one can tell when it will burst. That's the worst part of it—you get no warning until BANG! A blow-out. And you need more than driving skill to keep off the "accident list."

Real protection

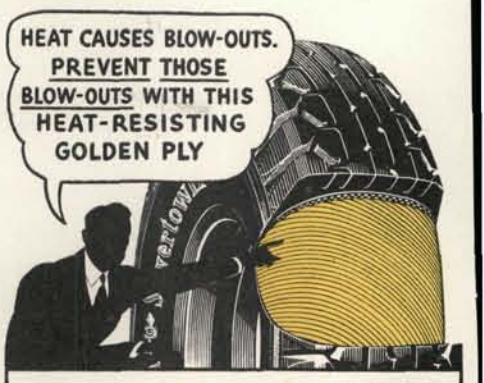
In order to give motorists real blow-out protection, Goodrich engineers developed the Life-Saver Golden Ply, a layer of special rubber and full-floating cords, scientifically treated to resist heat. By resisting internal tire heat this Golden Ply keeps rubber and fabric from separating. It keeps blisters from forming. And when you prevent the blister, you prevent the high-speed blow-out.

Silvertowns also have a specially designed tread that works like your windshield wiper. At the first sign of a skid the big center ribs *sweep* away water giving the double outer row of husky Silvertown cleats a drier surface to grip. Which means you'll stop *quicker, straighter, safer* on wet slippery roads.

No extra cost

Remember, no tire is really safe unless it protects you from today's high-speed blow-outs. And no tire gives you *Golden Ply* blow-out protection unless it's a Goodrich Safety Silvertown.

With Silvertowns on your car you'll not only enjoy greater safety and greater riding comfort, but you'll also get months of extra trouble-free mileage. Yet imagine, they *cost no more than other standard tires!* It pays to play safe. Put Silvertowns on your car now.



FREE! A million more motorists pledged to safe driving is the Goodrich goal for 1936. Prove that you want accidents prevented. Join the Silvertown Safety League at your Goodrich dealer. He'll get for you—free—a handsome emblem with a red crystal reflector to protect you if your tail light fails.

The new Goodrich SAFETY Silvertown

With Life-Saver Golden Ply Blow-Out Protection

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Your HAIR takes a double-trouncing from SUN and WATER

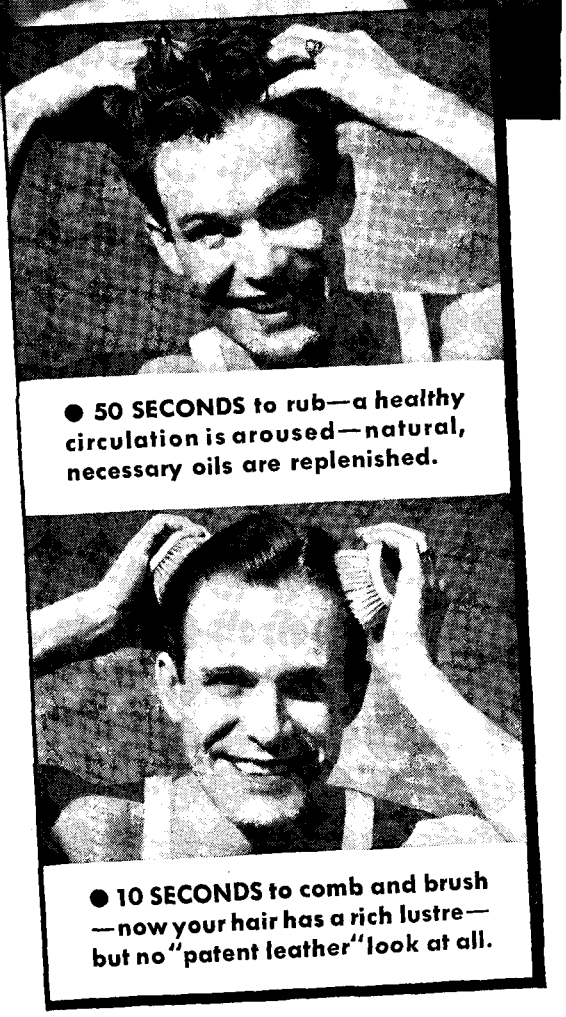
Protect it with VITALIS and the "60-SECOND WORKOUT"!

TOO MANY MEN stand by helplessly while their hair is mistreated in the summer! Hot sun bakes away natural, necessary oils and leaves hair brittle and lifeless. Then, if there's anything left of these oils, it's drenched out by swim or shower bath.

Your hair needs help—and you're the one to give it. Start the Vitalis "60-Second Workouts" today. Massage Vitalis deep down to the hair roots, down where hair health begins. Replenish necessary, natural oils with the pure, clean vegetable oils of Vitalis. Give your hair a new start towards health and handsomeness.

Now, comb your hair. The part is straight as a die—every hair's in its place. Lustre? It's rich and good-looking—not at all like "patent-leather." And there's no loose dandruff.

Your hair's got to have assistance in its fight against sun and water! Get a bottle of Vitalis at your nearest drug store. Start giving your hair a helping hand with Vitalis and the famous "60-Second Workout" today.



● 50 SECONDS to rub—a healthy circulation is aroused—natural, necessary oils are replenished.

● 10 SECONDS to comb and brush—now your hair has a rich lustre—but no "patent leather" look at all.

VITALIS

ASK YOUR BARBER—
He's an expert on the care of scalp and hair. When he says Vitalis—take his advice. He knows best.

KEEPS YOUR HAIR HEALTHY AND HANDSOME

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Collier's

THE NATIONAL WEEKLY

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Next Week

CHRISTY CAREW belonged to a good crowd, the best crowd in college. He belonged to the oldest club and went to the most exclusive parties. Not because he was rich. Not because of his family. Purely and simply because he was an athlete, a good one. That was his "Foot in the Door"—sports. In his soberer moments he realized it.

It wasn't one of those moments when Christy fell in love with John Slade's girl and married her. "Take the best care of her that's in your power," Slade said. "If she's ever hurt in any way, I'll know about it. Remember that." Their story is told by Newlin B. Wildes.

THE first line of America's defense to the west slopes sharply toward Asia. At its apex lie the Philippines. As long as we continue to be a world power those islands are essential to our safety. Now that we are preparing them for independence how can we be sure that they won't fall into hostile hands? General Douglas MacArthur is busy providing the answer to that question—an efficient and cheap Filipino army. That, co-operating with our Navy, will be the invincible "Spearhead of Our Defense."

THE poker game in the back room of Putnam's joint in the mining country was not a friendly session. No sooner had James Lee joined it than he realized that he would be lucky if he got out alive. Situations like that are made to order for our favorite Chinese detective. In "Seven of Spades" Hugh Wiley shows you James Lee outwitting the opposition.

JUST about the best-protected organ in the human body is a small gland about the size of a chestnut, hidden away in a bony sack which is tucked inside the skull. Science has recently begun to find out about that gland, called the pituitary. This small chestnut is the orchestra leader in the glandular symphony. The latest information about it is contained in "Choose Your Own Size," by Hannah Lees.

THE crisis at Annapolis that involved the stealing of the Navy goat and the engagement of Mr. Mike Lodge served also to make a hero of Master Lawrence Willoughby III. In the nick of time. The story is by Frederick Hazlitt Brennan.

GROVER JONES writes the Short Short Story. There will be contributions from Kathleen Norris, Kyle Crichton, Will F. Jenkins, E. Phillips Oppenheim, Arthur Mann, Freling Foster and others. Very much to everyone's satisfaction.

This Week

August 29, 1936

Cover by Alan Foster

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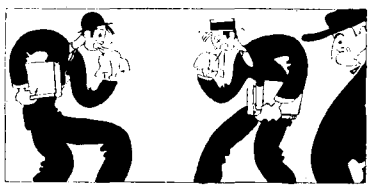
Any Week

FIRST place goes without contest to Mrs. Anna B. Lockfort of Des Moines, Iowa. And it's because she is "a hundred per cent Townsendite with doubts." In Cleveland, reports Mrs. Lockfort, thousands of dollars of Townsendite money were "freely and gladly given to insure the success of the greatest humanitarian cause the world has ever known. But," she goes on, "I wonder how much of the funds of the Share Our Wealth party and of the Union for Social Justice were contributed. Or were we just a ready-made audience for Father Coughlin and Brother Smith?"

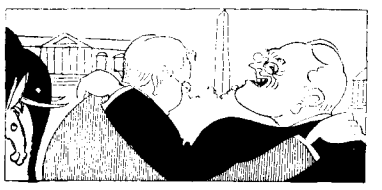
AND Mr. Laurence Brahm of Detroit, Michigan, informs us that they have a doctor out there who, after five years of research, is convinced that people who suffer from hay fever are more intellectual than non-sufferers. "The air," says Mr. Brahm, "is filled with proud sneezings and hay-feverites are seeing the inside of our libraries for the first time. But it's bad for politicians. They may have hay fever but don't dare sneeze lest they be taken for brain-trusters."



MR. YATES BURNS of Dallas, Texas, wants to know whether any nominee for the presidency has ever, when notified of his nomination, declined the honor. None has, although several who subsequently were elected would have done their fellow citizens a great service by firmly saying "No" and sticking to it. Neither is it possible to have a President arrested. And this covers a suggestion sent to us by Mr. George G. Jance of Prescott, Arizona. "In these days of brand-new ideas," says Mr. Jance, "why not a law making it possible to imprison officeholders for obtaining money under false pretenses, as you ought to be?"

WE WOULD be inclined to vote for a client of Mr. E. C. McNally of Los Angeles, California, for any office he chose to run for. Mr. McNally's client was in the paper and cordage business and wanted to get out of it. Mr. McNally undertook to find a buyer. And Mr. McNally did, everything going along nicely until the fellow who was going to buy asked the owner about the profits he might expect to make. "Profits?" cried the owner. "If there were any profit in this business do you suppose I'd be selling?"

"FROM what I hear," writes Mr. Sam Lukemann of Baltimore, Maryland, "it's a stand-off or tie. Landon can't lose and Roosevelt is unbeatable. This won't be as bad as it sounds. Let's swear them both in. They might work the job alternately — Landon this week and Roosevelt the next. Roosevelt could spend his time off on Astor's yacht and I'm sure some rich man will be glad to take Landon for a ride while he's loafing. If it got too complicated we might turn them both over to some millionaire and let Congress run the country for a while. And we could hire some nice-looking couple to live in the White House and entertain foreign celebrities."



MRS. FLORENCE KINDERDINE of Chicago, Illinois, having just returned from a month in Europe, intends to work for the election of Mr. Landon. "Because," says Mrs. Kinderdine, "the people I talked to in France, England, Germany and Italy, and in particular Americans who have been making Europe their home for some years, tell me that those countries would feel much more kindly toward America if we defeated President Roosevelt, whom they distrust and whom they blame for the growing feeling of nationalism in the United States. Also with Europe in a more kindly attitude we could collect our war debts."

MISS HELEN GIFFORD SMITH of Tulsa, Oklahoma, says that she knows of a colored preacher who, addressing his congregation a couple of weeks ago, said: "Children, they's gwine be a heap of white votin' round here soon and I hopes you all gwine be satisfied. If you ain't, be of good cheer. It wasn't none of your votin' and you all knows your conscience is clear. Bend your thoughts therefore towards the roof of this church whilst I pass the plate."

A FRIEND of ours told us that his son has at last taken a deep interest in politics. His son, a student at Yale, is about to cast his first vote. Our friend asked the young fellow how he was going to dispose of that maiden ballot. "Communist," said the lad. "But why?" asked the somewhat startled father. "Well," said the son, "it may be only temporary—but you ought to see her."

MORE of Moscow's deviltry.

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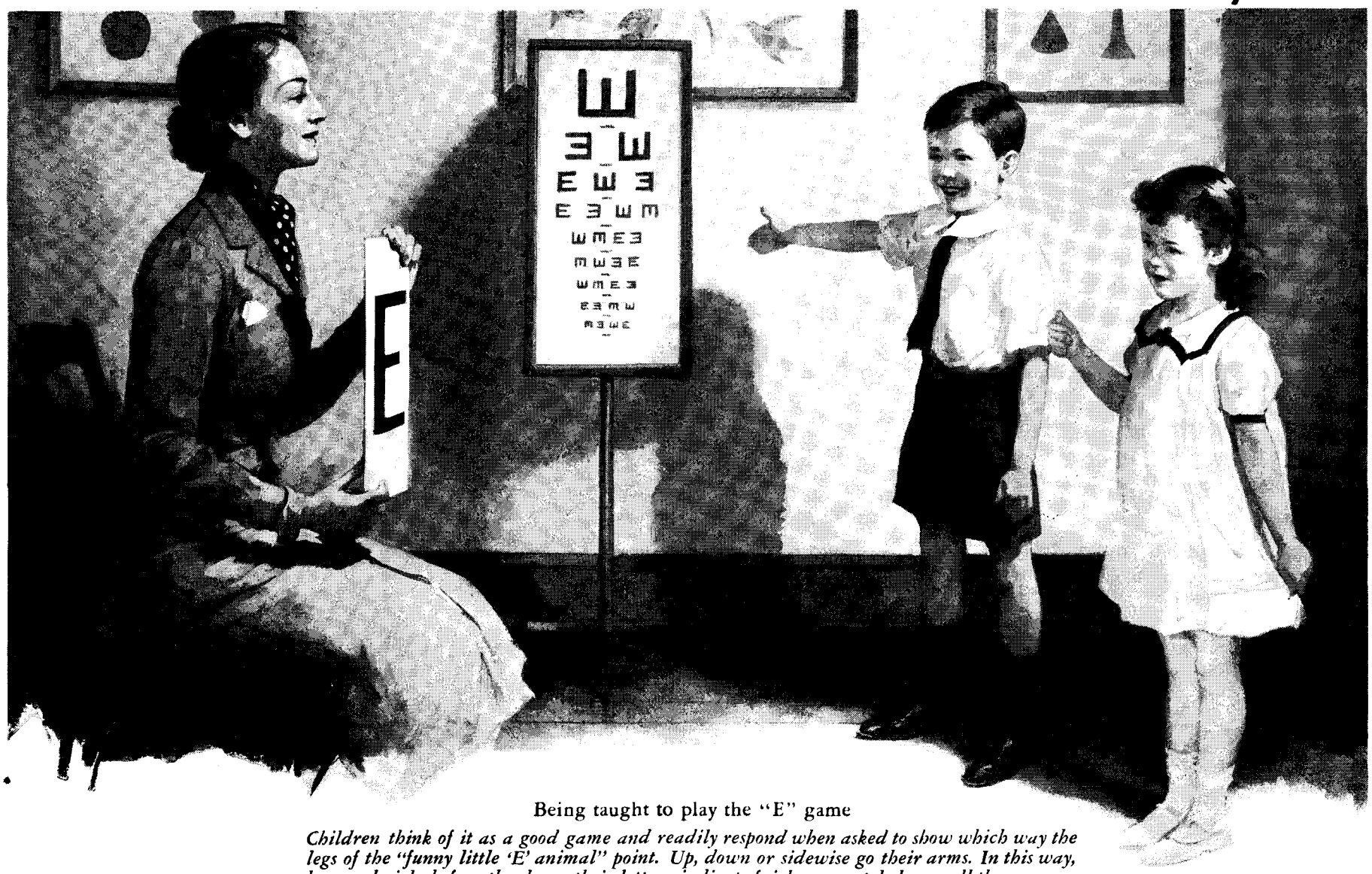
How Good Are Your Child's Eyes?



Being taught to play the "E" game

Children think of it as a good game and readily respond when asked to show which way the legs of the "funny little 'E' animal" point. Up, down or sidewise go their arms. In this way, boys and girls, before they know their letters, indicate fairly accurately how well they can see.

SCHOOL work means years of hard use for young eyes. Backwardness in school is frequently the result of defective eyesight. Before children go to school make sure their eyes are fit for study.

Modern eyesight tests are of great importance in demonstrating whether a child's eyes are fit to assume this strain. Many kindergartens are using the "E" Chart supplied by the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness to discover gross defects of vision.

Eye troubles are usually due to faults in the structure of the eye, to disease either in the eye or in other parts of the body, to some deficiency in the diet, to strain, or to improper use of the eyes. Eyes need special attention during and following serious illness.

Some visual defects may grow progressively worse if nothing is done to correct them. It is no use hoping that children will *outgrow* "cross-eye." But corrective measures save thousands of boys and girls yearly from becoming permanently cross-eyed.

Astigmatism, farsightedness, or nearsightedness can usually be corrected by glasses. Diseases of the eyes require special medical treatment.

Food plays an essential part in keeping eyes healthy. Of special importance to the health of the eyes are foods which contain Vitamin A, such as cream, butter, milk and fish oils.

Take no chances with vision by trying to fit your child with glasses, or by relying on home treatment. Eyes are too precious. Consult a specialist. Attention to the eyes should always be a part of regular health examinations.

The Metropolitan will be glad to send you, free, a booklet, "Care of the Eyes." It contains valuable information that you should have. Address Booklet Department 936-C.

Keep Healthy—Be Examined Regularly

METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

FREDERICK H. ECKER, Chairman of the Board ~ ONE MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y. ~ LEROY A. LINCOLN, President

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"Mister, I know Steel is SAFEST!"

"We picked Plymouth for that Safety-Steel Body...and the Style it Has!"

PUSHING STEEL UP toward the sky...swinging and fitting it to span rivers...working and living with steel for 29 years. That's the way Neal Woodruff got his knowledge of steel...and of steel construction.

That made Plymouth an easy choice when he bought his car. "I know construction, and I know the strength and safety of steel," he says. "So I checked cars for all-steel body construction.

"I wouldn't drive a car without a Safety-Steel Body...and for the same reason, I want the best Hydraulic Brakes.

"That Plymouth frame is as fine-looking a truss as I've ever seen in a building job. And the body fits down over the frame in the same kind of construction we use in skyscrapers.

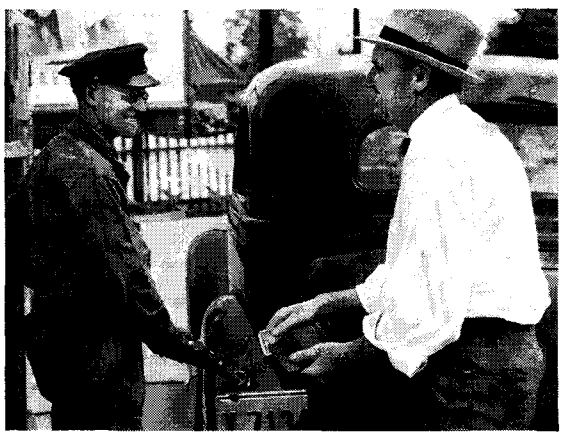
"Mrs. Woodruff helped pick our Plymouth. She liked its room, comfort, ease of driving. We both thought it was the best-looking of them all.

"After driving our Plymouth for months, we're better pleased than ever. It's easy on gas and oil ...costs practically nothing for upkeep...and always runs like a million dollars!"

• • •

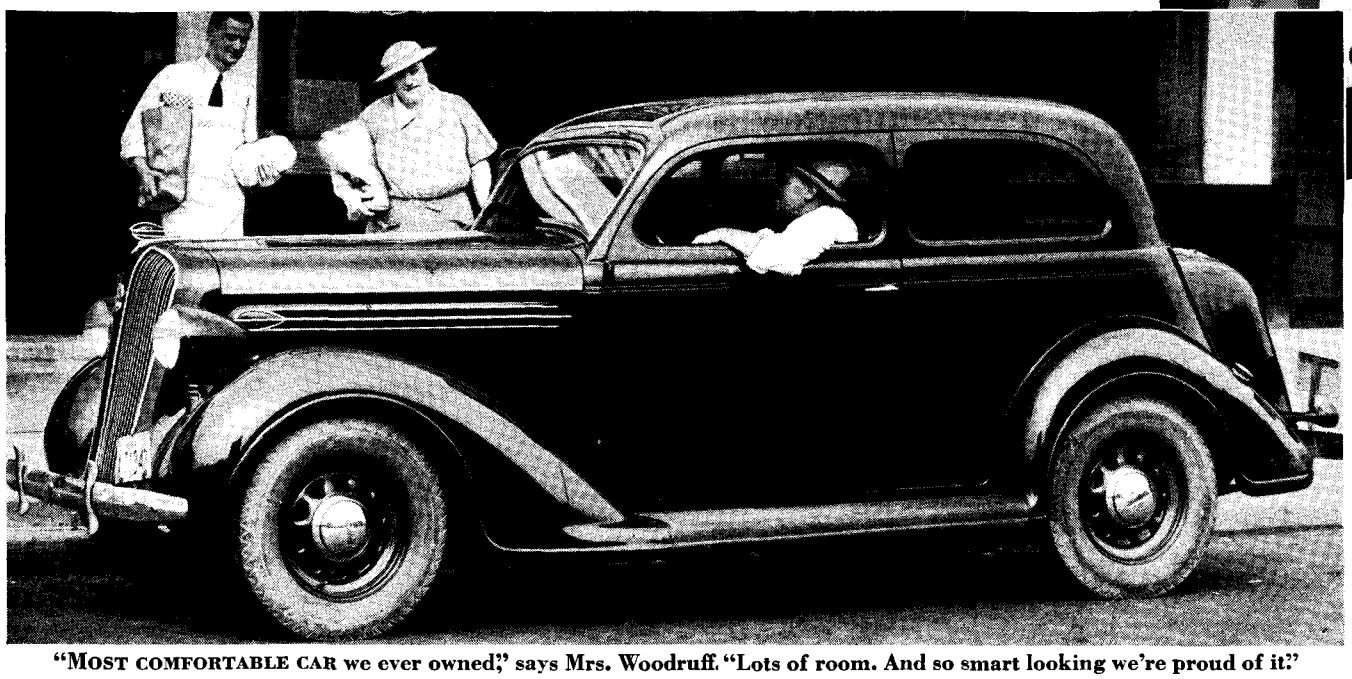
STEELWORKER WOODRUFF'S experience tells you why so many people all over America are switching to Plymouth. It's priced with the lowest but gives a lot of extra value... in greater safety, economy, comfort and reliability.

Before *you* buy, drive the beautiful, big Plymouth. Ask your Chrysler, DeSoto or Dodge dealer. PLYMOUTH DIVISION OF CHRYSLER CORP.



"NEVER HAD A CAR so easy on gas and oil. Costs practically nothing for upkeep either!"

"I'LL TELL THE WORLD Plymouth engineers know steel construction. Of all low-priced cars, Plymouth is the best built! That Plymouth body is steel reinforced with steel—and that means safety *plus*!"



"MOST COMFORTABLE CAR we ever owned," says Mrs. Woodruff. "Lots of room. And so smart looking we're proud of it."

EASY TO BUY

$25 a month buys a Plymouth. Commercial Credit Company offers dealers low terms making Plymouth easy to buy.

$510

AND UP, LIST AT FACTORY, DETROIT
SPECIAL EQUIPMENT EXTRA

PLYMOUTH BUILDS GREAT CARS

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If Gods Speak

Her eyes were terrible in their fixed stare. "You do not mean," she faltered, "that I am to die?"

SEVEN men were seated around a table in a magnificently proportioned but plainly furnished room on the topmost floor of the famous Humberstone Building. That they were men of consequence was evident by their appearance and general bearing. That they were assembled for a serious purpose was clearly apparent from the general atmosphere of gravity and suspense.

They appeared to be mostly between the ages of thirty-five and fifty, except for one who might have been a few years older, and who was dressed in the somber garb of an ecclesiastic of high rank. They sat in silence save for an occasional uneasy observation. They had all moved their chairs to a slight angle as though to be able to face one side of the room, into the wall of which had been let two large sheets of some sort of metal, the top sheet smooth, the lower one honeycombed with small interstices. Suddenly the man at the end of the oval table raised his finger.

"Humberstone is coming," he announced.

They all turned towards the folding doors which at that moment swung open. An invalid couch on rubber-tired wheels was pushed quietly into the room by a tall, well-built young man of athletic appearance, but with strongly chiseled features and the fine high forehead of a student. Everyone seated in the room rose for a moment. The man upon the couch, who was propped up into an almost sitting posture, raised his hand in salutation. The couch was wheeled to a convenient position, from which its occupant could see every one of the seven men. His hungry eyes, still bright and powerful, deep-set in his worn face, familiar to the world through the ceaseless efforts of decades of photographers, swept around the table. He addressed the man directly opposite him, a man of middle age and dignified presence. He spoke slowly and his voice was thin. Nevertheless, it was marvelously distinct.

"I must conserve my words," he said. "Digby Long, you are here to represent the President?"

"That is so, Mark," was the friendly reply. "As Vice President of the United States, I am empowered to sign any papers you may present, or to come to any agreement with you which I may consider desirable."

"Very well. My physicians, who are waiting outside, have issued their last warning. I must work quickly."

He lifted the black cylinder from the bracket attached to the side of the couch. "Will you please, the moment I touch this switch, turn towards the television receiver and listen to the loud-speaker? Watch! Now, if you please."

THERE was a murmur from the table. Everyone was leaning forward. The young man had taken his father's wrist, the wrist of a child, into his hand. Upon the screen was suddenly depicted a river, and in the middle of the stream a huge man-of-war making apparently slow progress against a powerful tide.

"The battleship you see," the man on the couch went on, "is the old City of Washington. She is making her way down the Hudson. You have her visualized?"

There was an affirmative chorus. Mark Humberstone leaned slightly to one side and touched the switch attached to the cylinder. For a moment there was a flash of scarlet light which darted around the room. The Vice President rose involuntarily to his feet. There was a staccato murmur of amazement.

"Continue to watch, if you please," the still quiet voice from the couch insisted. "By this time I think you discover that the battleship is out of control. Watch. You see her swinging round in the tide? . . . . Already she is in process of disintegration. . . . You observe the list?. . ."

For the last time on earth, Mark Humberstone smiled as he watched their faces.

"She is helpless," he told them. "She is four hundred and fifty miles away. It would have made no difference if she had been four thousand. I touch a switch and every electrical appliance which she possesses is dumb and nerveless. She is finished."

There was a rumble of voices from around the table. Astonishment had given place to awe. Everyone was staring at the tragedy depicted upon that shining plate of metal.

"Your whole attention, if you please, my friends," the great scientist begged, and it was noticeable that his voice had become a shade weaker. "What you have seen taking place, the powers which I am handing over can bring about at any time from a battleship, a fort, an observatory. We believe that the discovery of radium by itself was the greatest thing that had happened to the world in centuries. Beside this combination of forces which I present to you, this amplification and concentration of those

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electric currents with which our atmosphere is filled, radium is of no more account than the sands of the desert. I am handing over to you who sit around that table the gravest responsibility that was ever placed upon the shoulders of mankind.

"The control of these new powers in collaboration with a staff who know the secret only in sections will be yours to deal with on these terms. You will each put your signature to the document which the Vice-President has already in his hand and you will swear by the honor of your country that you will never consent to these powers being put into operation except for the holy purpose of proving to the world by illustration that war between the nations is no longer a possible enterprise. Only if at any time the United States should be attacked by a foreign enemy will you make use of these secret controls which I have sometimes thought in a nightmare I must have dragged up out of hell. Each one of you will appoint a successor to himself next in rank and capacity, who will succeed him in the case of his death. Seven you are now and seven you are to remain till the time of wars is past. This is understood?"

There was a murmur of assent but not one of them could look away from the screen. The voice of the man who had passed on to them that awful secret had ceased. They watched like men paralyzed. Not one of them realized that the miracle worker of his generation, the man who had helped to make his country almighty, was already facing the one unsolvable problem.

THE story which follows opens on April 14, 1947, some years after the granting of independence to the Philippine Islands by the United States, and subsequent to the attempted seizure of these islands by Japan, a proceeding which was followed by the greatest naval debacle in the world's history, when the Japanese fleet, at its full strength, was totally destroyed in the Pacific Ocean by a single battleship of the United States Navy equipped with the full range of the Humberstone discoveries.

At 10:43 on a morning when the deep blue sea of the Mediterranean was flecked with whitecaps and the clear outline of the Estérels suggested a mistral, Mr. Jonson stepped from his compartment in the Train Bleu and, with a suitcase in either hand, alighted upon the platform at Nice. After giving up his ticket at the barriers he summoned a small carriage.

"*Le Café des Oiseaux Noirs*, number seventeen, Avenue Laperle," he told the *cocher*. "It is in the direction of the old town."

The *cocher* glanced a trifle curiously at his passenger, whipped up his steed and drove off. Then he turned round and spoke:

"Monsieur understands without a doubt that the Avenue Laperle is outside the radius?"

His client grinned.

"Monsieur understands nothing of the sort," he replied. "Monsieur intends to pay the sum indicated upon the dial, with a suitable *pourboire*, and any dispute upon arrival will be referred to the nearest *gendarme*."

The *cocher* flicked the air with his whip and turned surlily around. There was something about the brusque air of the small, rosy-cheeked man who had taken possession of his *voiture* which made it doubtful whether argument would be worth the trouble.

"We shall see," was all he muttered. "Oh yes, we shall see."

Without undue haste, the end of the journey was reached at last. It was without a doubt an unprepossessing neighborhood. The building before which they had stopped was solidly built but was a somewhat sinister-looking tenement house, the ground floor of which was occupied by an apparently low-class café. The pavement was squalid. A sluggish canal, a turgid depository of filth, loomed unpleasantly near on the other side of the way. The *cocher* pointed to the dial.

"For the voyage itself, monsieur," he announced, "one demands three francs and forty centimes. To return one must ascend the hill. It is an awkward neighborhood. Monsieur will remember that in granting the *pourboire*."

Mr. Jonson counted out five francs with great care.

"In the matter of *pourboires*," he said, "I am a generous fellow. Take that and chase yourself!"

"She is helpless," he told them. "She is four hundred and fifty miles away"

MR. JONSON seated himself in a discreet corner at a three-legged table of unsavory appearance, with a bag on either side of him, and summoned a waiter. The latter, dressed in a shabby pull-over and a worn pair of trousers with shoes which gapingly displayed the absence of socks, came wearily up. He showed no surprise at the sight of a client obviously of better circumstances than the few others scattered about the place and, though his eyes dwelt for a moment upon the bags, curiosity seemed a dead impulse in him.

"*Monsieur desire?*" he muttered.

For answer Mr. Jonson tore off a marginal strip of paper from the journal which, wrapped round its stick, lay on a neighboring table. With a stump of lead pencil which he produced from his pocket he traced a number—1009—and passed it to the man. The latter took the paper, glanced at it and crumpled it in the palm of his hand.

"*Monsieur desire?*" he repeated.

"*Un café simple*," Mr. Jonson replied.

The waiter departed. On his way he stopped before one of the receptacles for ashes which stood in the place. The crumpled and torn fragments of the scrap of paper which had been handed to him were added to its contents. Afterwards the man lumbered on and disappeared round an angle of the café. Mr. Jonson disposed himself to wait. As a matter of fact, he waited for a very short time. Within five minutes a woman approached his table bearing a tray. She set the contents before him—a metal coffeepot, a single cup and saucer.

"It is what Monsieur desires?"

HE LOOKED at her curiously. She was a stout woman but her black dress was neat and in good repair. Her enormous bosoms were forced back in their place by the tightness of her bodice. She had magnificent black hair smoothly brushed and a faint mustache upon her upper lip. Her eyes were hard and bright. She might have been any age between twenty-five and forty-five.

"Monsieur chooses a strange place to drink his coffee," she remarked.

Monsieur smiled.

"My name is Jonson," he said. "I have come to see the jackdaws."

The woman looked around.

"Do not drink that muck," she enjoined. "There is better awaits you."

"I come now?" he asked.

Once more she glanced lazily around to the right and to the left. She stepped out onto the pavement through the opened door. All the time she seemed to be looking nowhere. All the time Mr. Jonson felt that there was nothing she did not see.

"Now as well as any time," she replied carelessly. "Monsieur must carry his own bags."

"That is what Monsieur would much prefer," was the smiling assent.

Out through the back quarters into a villainous-looking courtyard, along a

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dark passage from which branched several mysterious alleyways, out into another street, a broader street with a row of lime trees on the other side, a street which might not perhaps have been so bad except that the wind was bending back the branches of the trees and raising clouds of stinking dust. The woman pointed to a door in the building from which they had emerged a few yards up the street.

"Monsieur will find what he wants," she said, "if he mounts three flights of stairs and knocks at the door of the room number seven."

"And if I do not find it," he muttered, "I suppose I shall find trouble."

"One takes one's risks," she answered, "when one comes to see the jackdaws. If you please it is well. If you are not acceptable—well," she added with a wicked smile, "it is a neighborhood where things happen."

MR. JONSON took up his bags, parted with one temporarily to open the outside door, picked it up again and passed into a small hall devoid of furniture, yet also devoid of the sickening evidences of filthy neglect of the café which he had just left. He mounted to the first floor and found indications there that the building had once been the habitation of people of consequence. The doors had a solid appearance and the metal numbers attached to each were of brass. The second floor was better still. There was light here, for the windows had been cleaned, and from one of them he caught glimpses of the town below and a peep of the distant sea. Here were three more rooms—four, five and six.

Once more he mounted and this time things showed still further improvement. There was a large oaken door with a very visible number seven facing him. On the right there was a window and a balcony. The walls were clean and had apparently recently been washed. There was an electric push bell immediately in front of him. Mr. Jonson held his finger steadily upon it. Even before he had had time to remove it the door was opened. A young woman, plainly dressed but of neat and distinguished appearance, looked out at him.

"This, perhaps," Mr. Jonson suggested, removing his hat with great politeness, "is the bureau of which I am in search?"

"Monsieur by his question has made that apparent," she replied.

Mr. Jonson and his two bags disappeared behind the door. They were swallowed up in room number seven of the far-reaching annex of the *Café des Oiseaux Noirs*.

MR. JONSON was beginning to be very interested indeed in this novel byway leading out onto the great road of adventure along which he had steadily made his way since his arrival at manhood. Up to the moment of his being ushered into that barely furnished but somehow impressive-looking apartment and finding himself alone with a young woman, whose distinction he was well able to appreciate, he had found the opening up of this episode of his career a little disappointing. Everyone knew that Nice was a city of mysterious cafés and bands of criminals with secret haunts and that there were parts of the city into which it was unsafe to venture without police protection. There was an element of staleness in the whole affair which was suddenly dissipated by the appearance upon the scene of his present companion.

He leaned slightly back in the easy chair which he had been invited to occupy, and he looked across at the young woman with steady, appraising eyes.

"I begin to find it more difficult than I expected, mademoiselle," he confided, "to enlist myself as a member in your famous society. It is for that purpose I am here."

He took the paper, glanced at it and crumpled it in the palm of his hand

She shrugged her shoulders.

"I wonder what you know about us really?" she inquired.

"Very little," he acknowledged. "I have heard you called the Foreign Legion of Espionage."

She nodded her head gravely.

"The idea is not a bad one."

"But whereas," Mr. Jonson continued, "to join the Foreign Legion the formalities are of a usual type and no penalty seems to be attached for rejection, with you things are different. One has heard of men—and women, too—who set out blithely to become one of your number and who have never been heard of again."

"Quite true," she admitted tolerantly. "But you must remember this, Mr. Jonson. These people to whom you allude have been emissaries of the police or emissaries of the foreign powers against whom we have been working. Neither Mr. Humberstone nor Mr. Cheng are lenient men to deal with in such circumstances."

"Now, how do I stand?" he asked her. "I have sent you references from two places which we will not mention in Asia, from Paris and from Moscow. I have done work in the underworld but official positions now, where there is really scope for enterprise, scope for a man who is not afraid to risk his life, are few. I have come to you as an honest man. I wish to work for you and not against you."

"THEN," she said, changing her position a little as though to avoid the sunlight which was flooding into the room, "it is a pity that you tried to deceive us about your nationality."

He nodded thoughtfully.

"Yes," he acknowledged, "that was perhaps a mistake. Yet if I had told you the whole truth I doubt if I would have received this invitation to visit you."

"Of that I am not so sure," she said. "It is strange that a man who wields the power Mr. Humberstone wields, who was the instigator and who is now the inspiration of an amazing International Bureau of Espionage, should be such a passionate lover of the truth. I have known him to risk the whole success of a great coup rather than have his principal agent tell a direct lie."

"It is illogical, that," Mr. Jonson declared.

"Very likely," she assented, "but it does not alter the fact that you have come to us with a lie upon your lips. Others before you have found their way to the *Café des Oiseaux Noirs*, have even in one or two cases reached this chamber, but that has been the end—they have never found their way back into the world."

"Supposing I make a clean breast of it," Mr. Jonson suggested amiably.

The girl smiled at him. It became more and more apparent that in her quiet way she was remarkably attractive. She tapped a cigarette upon the table and lit it.

"Is not that just a trifle ingenuous?" she asked. "When we found out that a part of your story was not true it goes without saying that we set ourselves to discover the actual truth."

Mr. Jonson seemed to grow a little smaller in his chair. He wondered whether those blue eyes, which he admired so much beneath their silky eyebrows, were really blue or whether there was not a glitter of steel in them.

Nevertheless, he continued to smile. For a few seconds the girl was busy. There was a confusion of telephones. She handled the situation skillfully with swift fingers and a voice which changed curiously as she spoke through the instruments. Finally she leaned back.

(*Continued on page* 34)

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Miss Alabama

By Frank Condon

Mr. Tree, of Hollywood, meets a girl from Mobile—a Hollywood romance with a Southern accent

The joyous house guests were playing ring-around-a-rosy, with us four in the center

WHENEVER we finish up one of our expensive and deathless motion pictures, and prepare to tackle a fresh one, there is a period of calm known as "between pictures" and at this time Henry Wing usually has, gives, holds or throws a festival or party at his magnificent French château in West Hollywood hard by the polo field. Henry is our respected boss, or director, and leans heavily to wild parties, although when at work on the set he is a strict disciplinarian, drinks nothing but buttermilk and will instantly dismiss any employee who happens to get steamed up during work hours.

Everything really began at Henry's between-pictures party about the time the Burgundy gave out. Our company had just finished a momentous thing named Firebrand and we were facing our next chore, Southern Love, and so Henry was host to movie actors who had worked for us or were going to. In addition, the rooms were filled with Hollywood movie ones who attend all parties, invited or not, and who could break into Alcatraz if there were anything going on.

About ten o'clock, three guests had been pushed into the pool; Henry had personally shot a comedian with a blank gun, amid laughter, and the entire company was in a mellow and merry mood. Henry arose at his end of the table, pounded with an ale mug for silence and came through with one of his sudden impulses.

"What do you say, all you people," he shouted, "what do you say to a first-class, bang-up wedding? How about Margolies and me getting married tonight?"

INSTANTLY the place was in violent uproar. Actors bounded up and down, yelling for immediate matrimony. The rafters rang with cheers, hand-clapping and the shrieks of delighted extra girls.

Mr. Wing referred, of course, to himself and Margolies Adams, as they have been more or less engaged and threatening marriage for some time. Miss Adams is our famous beauty and the star of our company, Henry the director, and the combination has turned out a flock of money-makers for the firm. We all knew she was good in Firebrand and would be even better in Southern Love.

Over on her side of the table, Miss Adams beamed acquiescence: "Ready to be married this very minute," she cried, "but the question naturally pops up, how could we be married so late at night?"

Mr. Wing pounded again and the handle came off. "We can fly over to Calamex," he shouted, full of Burgundy and old English ale, "and not only that, but we can be spectacularly married in that government blimp and have red streamers out behind saying 'just married' like a tire advertisement. After that, we will all fly back to Hollywood, and there is what I call a swell wedding high up in the pure blue of heaven."

Well, you never heard such delighted yelling under a roof. Henry added a few details: "We can take the wedding guests over in a plane. Andy," he said, meaning me, "go charter a plane for Calamex."

"Yes, Mr. Wing," I replied. "The plane will be ready in an hour."

He continued to stare fixedly at me, as though thinking of something, which he was, and he can think of queer things. Mr. Wing is my immediate superior at our studio and orders me around without restraint and often with profanity. He is the director of dramas and I am the assistant director and after years of such relations a man gets to doing what the director commands. It's like in the Navy.

He now broke into one of his whimsical smiles, ending in a roar. "And while we are about it," he said enthusiastically, "we may as well have a double wedding for our distinguished guests. Anyhow, you two ought to be spliced, as you are getting to be the talk of the studio."

He had his eye on me like the Ancient Mariner, so I asked: "What two?"

"You and Genevieve," he cried, and at that the guests cracked loose into another fanfare, slapping me on the back and lifting Genevieve to a chair so she could take a blushing bow.

AT THIS juncture I should have known, had I been in my senses, that the party was out of control from old Burgundy and that my boss was in one of his inventive moods. Naturally, he was jesting when he said we were the talk of the studio, as nothing could be farther from the truth. Genevieve Mercedes is only a young extra girl, with nice dark hair and eyebrows like a pencil mark. She is an ordinary Hollywood extra; blue eyes, too much lipstick, and some intellect, but not a mental type.

She has been snaring extra jobs from Mr. Wing, who thinks she is cute, and she moons around him admiringly and with loving phrases, often irritating our lady star. I have frequently escorted Genevieve to the dog races, dances and bowling alleys, as she is lively and ornamental, but I have never waxed sentimental or discussed with her the joys of married life, nor would I jump into a Japanese volcano if she suddenly married a stranger. Pals we have been and not much mush about it.

By this time, the joyous house guests were playing ring-around-a-rosy, with us four in the center, Mr. Wing, Margolies Adams, Genevieve and myself, and it must have been the sparkling Burgundy or possibly ye olde English ale, as I accepted this ridiculous situation and

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ILLUSTRATED BY HARRY BECKHOFF

felt no pangs of alarm. In fact, I seemed to be in favor of the daring enterprise. Doing as Mr. Wing wishes has been a long-established habit and I found myself vigorously cheering the laudable state of matrimony, drinking further toasts to the brides and grooms and whooping it up, a custom rather foreign to me.

Upon being asked how she felt, Miss Mercedes replied that all her whole life long she had yearned to be wedded in a blimp at a double ceremony and how soon could the happy couples start for Calamex in the air liner?

That brought me back to earth with a clank, mere mention of air liners, for it happens I am a non-user of aerial transportation in any form and even kites make me nervous. It can be seen that I must have been plenty steamed to be talking of marriage in a blimp. Henry Wing flies as a matter of habit; Margolies once owned a plane, till halted by the studio, and little Mercedes hasn't enough sense to stay on terra firma; but I am a true ground-lover, with a fondness for trains, buses and boats, and not for six hundred dollars would I normally set foot in a sky liner.

"Mr. Wing," I ventured, when there was an instant of quiet, "we might encounter a little trouble chartering a plane at this late hour. We may meet further delays in Calamex. It would simplify matters if I took the night train, arranged over there with the justice of the peace and the blimp people and made everything ready for a quick job. Then you could all come over in the plane tomorrow and we'd save time."

As with many of my suggestions, this had a sensible sound and Mr. Wing agreed. "Go ahead," he ordered. "We'll all be there on the plane. Don't forget the licenses and the blimp, with a banner saying 'just married.'"

When I left the party, they were starting on the other champagne and Margolies was giving her imitation of Garbo. I caught the midnight local to Calamex, a small village on the border line between California and Mexico, often selected by movie people who wished to be married in haste, so as to make Reno a part of their future.

THERE were no berths to be had, so I sat up all night and drank water. As the spiritual exaltation and Burgundy faded, I began to see the folly a man can slide into while partly crocked, and the more water I drank from the railroad paper cups, the more was I certain that here was this year's major mistake. It was all very well, if Mr. Wing wished to marry Margolies, either in a blimp or elsewhere, but why drag Andy Tree into the picture?

I began mentally backing out, as the old bean resumed its normal clicking, first because nobody can ever get me into a blimp and second, because I had no desire to marry Miss Mercedes or anyone else. It was plain silly.

In Southern Love, Genevieve would probably have another job, as soon as we could get the cast together and see what we required. She usually had a small part, but this time we were thinking of her as a possible Miss Alabama. . . . We definitely needed a Southern miss and a pretty one and Mr. Wing rejected half a dozen dames before reluctantly promising the part to Genevieve.

She sometimes spoke with a Southern accent, which she had acquired for social purposes and squandered on new men, especially after a few cocktails. Her home town was Duluth and it wasn't that I didn't like the girl in a casual way, but marrying is serious, and you may have to live with the party four or five years. I drank more water, felt steadily worse, and as dawn came on I sank into those minor forms of death that go along with an ale-and-Burgundy hangover.

The train finally rolled into Calamex and I feebly stepped down, looked about me and observed only a bleak and solitary railway station and a signboard indicating that Calamex was somewhere near.

Out of the nowhere suddenly appeared a small Pekingese dog, furry and brown, its tongue sticking out, as with all Pekingese dogs, its tail wagging in the cool air. It seemed to come from the near-by desert and, being fond of animals, I was grateful, even for a dog.

"Nice little doggie," I began, as the pup waggled up, its tail indicating love and affection. "What is the little doggie doing up so early?"

I leaned over, patted him on the head and, with no warning, the little scoundrel bit me on the thumb, yelped angrily and scooted. That was all I needed to make it a perfect morning—a dog-bite. I looked for a stone and chased the little devil into a sagebrush, wiped my thumb, swore in low, bitter tones and heard the noise of an approaching car, first evidence that Calamex was a city of the living.

It was a seedy-looking sedan, boneyard type, about eight years old, its contents being a girl with a worried manner. She stopped, stepped out, came over my way, and as I stared at her, ill as I was, I knew definitely that this was going to be one of the great moments in my life.

"Have you seen a dog?" she inquired, and just as I expected, her voice was like the tinkle of heavenly music at eventide.

"I have not only seen the dog," I said politely, "but I have also been bitten by the little wretch."

"That's too bad. A Pekingese?"

"Yes, a nasty, little bad-tempered Pekingese, with a red tongue, pop eyes and a lying tail. Your dog?"

"She is not a nasty little dog. It's my dog and she's lost. Where is she?"

"Out yonder on the desert, where I chased her. You could be arrested for letting loose man-eating dogs on the public."

"I'm sorry she nipped you," said the lovely creature. "Groggy doesn't seem to get on well with strangers, but she really has no teeth. Let me see."

"It's nothing," I said hastily. "She probably gummed me. Come along and I'll help you find your repellent little pooch. She cannot be far off and is likely waiting for another crack at me."

TOGETHER we started into the desert, the girl calling her dog in a plaintive voice, and we found the little rascal sitting defiantly under a tumbleweed. Instantly the owner was joyous, but happy or sad, she was one of the loveliest sights I have ever seen, and remember I work in a studio that specializes in pretty women.

"I'm sure much obliged to you," she told me. "She's always jumping out of the car and I might have lost her."

I noticed she talked with a Southern accent and I knew I had the Miss Alabama we had been seeking. Mr. Wing would be wild about this girl. It was one of those drawly Southern accents that rubs your fur the right way.

"You might give me a little information," I said. "Why the railroad station and no town, and where is Calamex, if any?"

She smiled and I could see her winning an audience with ease.

"It's four miles away. If you're going in, I'll be glad to drive you in yon palatial limousine."

I climbed aboard and after we started she explained why Calamex had been built four miles away from the railroad. One of them was mad at the other. She continued to regard me with girlish curiosity.

"If I might be inquisitive," she remarked, "why are you alone at the station so early in the morning?"

(Continued on page 44)

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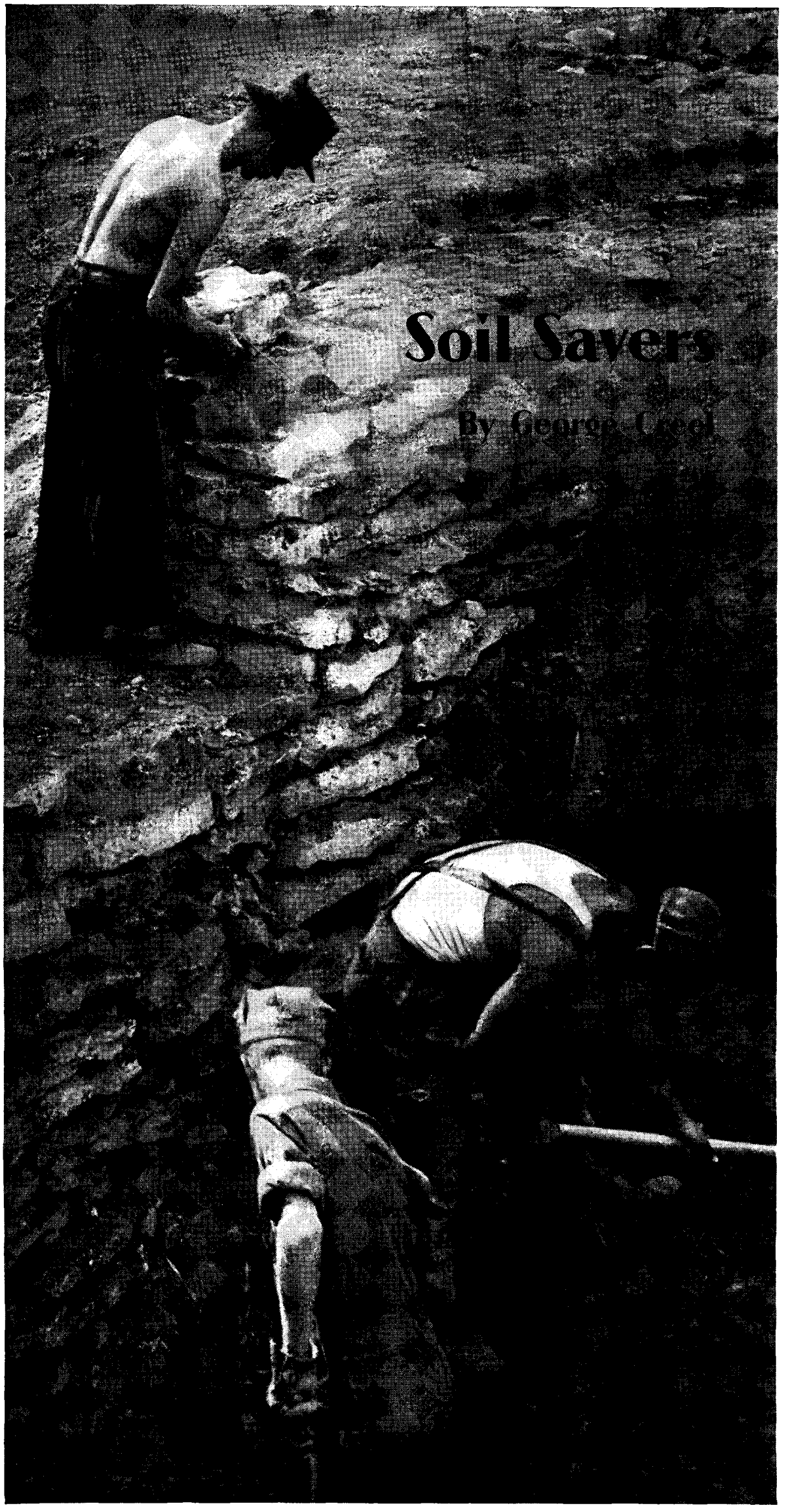

Missouri CCC youths, directed by the Soil Conservation Service, building a check dam for gully control

Soil Savers

By George Creel

It took a black cyclone to convince the members of a Senate committee, but once the rich topsoil of the Middle West had got into their mouths and lungs the Soil Conservation Service was born with great rapidity. Its job is to protect us against the unprincipled thievery of rain and wind and to show the farmer how to make his farm worth more. Its method is persuasion and co-operation. Watch it work

BACK in April, 1935, H. H. Bennett, head of the Soil Erosion Service, appeared before a Senate committee to urge that the work be taken out of the emergency class and established as a permanent agency of government. The senatorial attitude was far from sympathetic, some holding that the land picture was not as black as painted, and others frankly stating that the New Deal had already spawned too many commissions, boards and bureaus.

Mr. Bennett argued valiantly, producing gloomy figures to prove that fifty million acres had been ruined already by soil erosion, that another fifty million were close to being submarginal, farmers abandoning them at the rate of two hundred thousand acres a year, and that a full million acres were gravely endangered by ignorance and neglect. Four hundred million dollars was his estimate of the annual money loss.

Surely every senator must know, he pleaded flatteringly, that the Sahara and Gobi deserts, and the treeless, waterless stretches of Central Asia, Palestine and Mesopotamia were once fertile regions green with forests, streams, vineyards and orchards. And that the desertion of the great Mayan cities, now being uncovered in the jungles of Yucatan, was due to soil erosion. Topsoil, washing away from cultivated fields on the hillsides, robbed the land of productivity and choked the lakes with mud, forcing migration. Did they want that sort of thing to happen to America?

Only Mr. Bennett manifested agitation at the prospect, the committee members retaining their calm without visible effort, but just as the scientist was about to give it up as a hopeless job, the heavens darkened and the air grew thick as pea soup. His experienced eyes recognized the signs at once, and springing to his feet, he invited the senators to step out on the balcony with him, and see for themselves the consequences of soil erosion.

And the Committee Was Convinced

"That dust storm," he pointed, "is what comes of cutting down forests, draining lakes, ponds and marshes, robbing plains and prairies of vegetative covering, and then plowing and planting unintelligently and recklessly. Do you realize that that dust was fertile topsoil on fields a thousand miles from here? Or how long it takes nature to produce an inch of topsoil?" he demanded, pressing his advantage. "From four hundred to a thousand years! And man's wastefulness can destroy that inch in a decade. The Black Cyclone we are watching, and others like it, have swept away three hundred million tons of good rich dirt. Add water erosion to wind erosion, and you've got a total of three billion tons lost from the fields of the United States every year. The Mississippi River alone annually carries three hundred million tons into the Gulf of Mexico. Deserts, gentlemen! Man-made deserts! That's America's future unless we take immediate and effective action."

"Say no more," gasped the committee, their mouths full of dust and grit. "You win." Returning to the chamber, without one dissenting vote they approved the bill that created the Soil Conservation Service, transferring the work from Interior to Agriculture despite the anguished screams of Secretary Ickes. And without a negative vote both Senate and House passed the measure. Straightway Mr. Bennett and his experts, encouraged by the promise of permanency, scattered to the four quarters of the country, launching a far-flung campaign against the waste that has turned vast areas of our fertile heritage into naked, ugly barrens.

As a first step, one hundred and thirty-five demonstration areas were laid out in forty-one states, each covering a natural watershed, and reaching from the crest of the ridge on either side down to the streams. One might contain three hundred farms, another six

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hundred, and still another a thousand. Mr. Bennett, himself a tiller of the soil until he went scientific, spoke as follows to the farmers of these areas: "We're agents of your government, here to show you how to farm land and at the same time conserve it. There's nothing compulsory about the business. If you want to sign up for five years, accepting our suggestions and supervision, we'll give you the best we've got. If you don't want to, that's all right, and we hope you won't be sorry."

Today the Soil Conservation Service is working cooperatively in these demonstration areas with some 40,000 farmers, tilling six million acres, and the idea has the spread of a prairie fire. Two hundred and fifty voluntary soil conservation associations, representing three million acres, have been formed already by eager agriculturists. When the experience of an individual farmer is followed through, the reason for enthusiasm stands plain. Let us, by way of illustration, take the case of Mr. Adam, owner of 120 acres in Ohio that no longer yield the comfortable living enjoyed by his father.

The instant that he signs up, Service specialists start on an "erosion survey map," showing the types of soil, the slope of the land, existing land usage, and the extent to which top dirt has been washed or blown off his fields. When completed, it is handed over to the soil conservationist who, with the engineer, the agronomist, the forester, the plant men and other specialists on the demonstration staff, translates the "erosion map" into a "land use map." This done, Mr. Adam is called into consultation and shown what the Service proposes to do, and just why it is being done.

How to Save the Adam Farm

"You'll see we've divided your farm into seven fields," explains the project conservationist. "These symbols tell what old fencing will have to be torn down, and what new fences are needed. Owing to your financial condition, we'll help out on the work. Now here in Field Number 1 are the 28 acres you have in pasture. Pretty bad case of erosion, Mr. Adam. From 50 to 75 per cent of your topsoil gone, and a lot of deep gullies. All due to overgrazing. Grass eaten down to the roots, leaving nothing to hold rainfall.

"Well, we're going to keep the pasture, but you've got to reseed it. Our agronomist will advise with you as to the type of grass, for the slope needs a good soil binder. And you'll notice we call for contour furrowing. What's that? Just applied common sense, Mr. Adam. A machine has been perfected that digs small ditches at right angles to the slope, piling the sod roots down for an embankment, and rolling it firmly into place. Or an ordinary plow can do the job well enough. These ditches slow the rain run-off and also retain a large percentage of water. That's the big idea behind all of our work. Make running water *creep*, and as it creeps, *sink into the soil*. Plow on the contour, instead of up and down, and each furrow and harrow scratch becomes a small dam.

"As for the gullies, they're bad business, Mr. Adam. Deepening and widening all the time. Now these Grand Canyons here," and he ticks the map with his pencil, "will require diversion ditches, carrying the rainfall off to one side, and a planting of black locust and shrubbery in the gullies themselves. Some of the little fellows can have their banks pushed down with a tractor, filling them up enough to take grass seed, and others need check dams made of brush and logs or cheap wire. Now don't start worrying, Mr. Adam. Boys from the nearest CCC camp will come over and build them without cost to you.

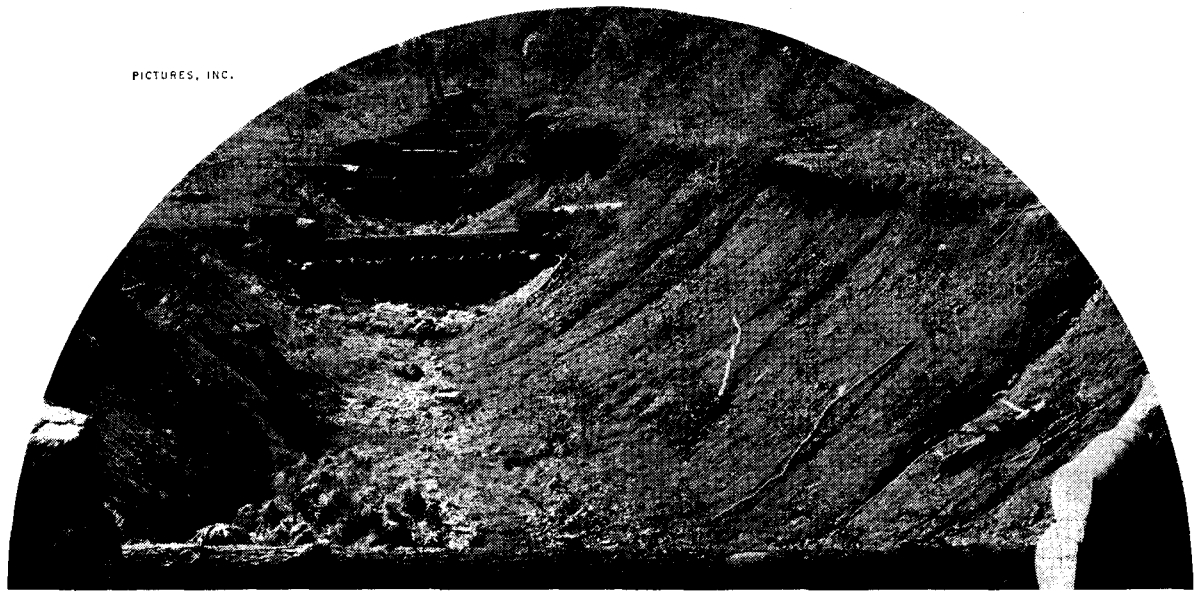
"Field Number 2 is the fourteen-acre hillside that you've been planting in corn. A clean-cultivated crop, Mr. Adam, and as if that weren't enough, your furrows run up and down. No wonder there's fifty per cent erosion in a number of places. Every furrow a canal to carry off water and soil at top speed. Now let's see what our doctors order. Oh, yes. Rotation and strip cropping. That means you'll plant an eighty-foot strip of corn at right angles to the slope, then a thirty-foot strip of some close-growing, fibrous-rooted grass like timothy, mixed with alfalfa or some other legume, then another strip of corn and a second strip of soil-binding stuff, and so on.

"Get the idea? The grass and legume strips hold the rain and filter out the sediment, so that you store water and keep topsoil. As for rotation, that's merely making a switch after each season, corn or wheat and grasses changing places. Wheat and corn take nitrogen out of the soil, and legumes put it back. Farmers spend about $158,000,000 annually on commercial fertilizers, yet sixty times that amount of plant food is washed or blown away every year. Doesn't seem quite sensible, does it?

"Coming to Field Number 3," continues the project engineer, "we're going to keep that twelve and a half acres of woodland. Our forester will help you thin out the spindly growth, clear up the underbrush and advise about new planting. Handled properly, Mr. Adam, you can harvest trees just as you do corn or wheat. Aside from posts and fuel for yourself, you can get saw logs, railroad ties, mine timbers and pulp wood. Also 'wild crops.' That patch of woods will serve as cover and food for game of all sorts, just as this pond over here can be made to produce waterfowl, fur and fish.

"Field Number 4 is another pasture on a slope that's pretty steep. Bad erosion! We can save eight acres by rotation and strip cropping, but three acres will have to be retired from cultivation. No use pouring your sweat into land that can't possibly yield a penny of return. Bankrupt land, Mr. Adam, makes bankrupt farmers. We'll put it in grass and trees. Field 5 is also pretty hopeless. A rather steep slope, and you've had it in corn year after year. Rotation and strip cropping may protect fifteen acres, but eight must go out of cultivation.

"Field 6 shows eleven acres gone to pot. A slope planted in wheat without even a speck of clover! Why, my dear Mr. Adam, you must have seen the topsoil washing off right before your eyes! Note the large T there on the map. That means terracing. Stone walls? No, sir! That's the European type. We've evolved an American system that's peculiarly our own. Here are some photographs that will make it clear to you."



Upper: Soil-saving dams built in a ravine to check erosion on a New Mexico farm
Lower: A field in South Carolina saved from erosion by strip-cropping on the contour

What Mr. Adam sees is a tractor-drawn grader that throws up substantial ridges of earth, about 45 feet apart on steep hillsides, and ranging from 125 to 150 feet on gentle slopes. These ridges not only prevent soil movement but also hold the rainfall, although not to a point where the excess water spills over, for each channel slopes gradually to the edge of the field and empties into a prepared waterway that leads either to a drainage stream or to forest land. Crops are planted between the ridges and, where the mounds have a broad base, even on top of them.

The Service furnishes tools and terracing equipment in the demonstration areas, but aid is also provided for others who ask it. The Farm Credit Administration, by way of encouragement, finances the purchase of equipment by co-operative associations, and in many states the county buys a grader and does the work for the farmer at a definite rate per acre.

Then There's Wind Erosion

Coming to Field Number 7, the conservationist shakes his head sadly. "Another eight acres that have got to be retired from cultivation. Poor blue grass on a slope, and overgrazed in addition. Topsoil gone and badly gullied. We'll plant the crest of the ridge in trees, take care of the gullies with check dams, diversion ditches and locust groves, and re-seed the rest. Well, Mr. Adam, that seems to be all except for the winter cover crops. Here's your schedule for them. Protection for the land until spring, and then a good green manure to plow under. All set? Then let's go."

Out in the prairie country, of course, where wind erosion causes the damage, the Service faces an entirely different problem from that presented by an Ohio farm. As an emergency measure, listing is recommended, the two-row machine digging foot-deep furrows and throwing up a ridge that roughens the land, robbing winds of full sweep. Complete erosion control, however, is purely a matter of foresight and precaution. Translated into land management, this means strip cultivation, letting stubble remain in the ground as a binder for the soil, plowless fallow, cover crops, quick growing grasses, and for a long-time remedy the growing of trees for shelter at strategic points.

Fortunately, the Soil Conservation Service has not had to start from scratch. Twelve experiment stations, maintained by the Department of Agriculture, have been at work since 1929, making a scientific study of every type of erosion; not only the dust

(Continued on page 49)

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Napoleon the Fifth

By Sidney Herschel Small

Nap Bancroft learns that some girls won't wait—and gets a newspaper story which was more than the city editor expected

ILLUSTRATED BY CARL MUELLER

NAP BANCROFT said, "You saw me do it with your own eyes, darling?" into the telephone and watched Yee Yick fill his creamed cup with coffee. He felt very fine. It was marvelous what a little sleep, a shower, could do for a fellow. He wondered, listening to Sue Ingalls' account of the previous night, what he was to have for breakfast, whether anything had broken on the Pryor story, and why Sue was reminding him of things just as well forgotten.

"A reporter I am, lovely," Nap said, "even when slightly stiff. The proper word is leg man. If you say I bit somebody's Peke, I bit it, but purely for professional and scientific reasons."

Sue, from what she was saying, must be low.

"Dear heart," explained Nap, "I like the newspaper racket, even if the Sun-Bulletin goes a thousand or so into the red every month. Let me have my fun . . .

"Well, I had to begin somewhere, despite the fact that I own the sheet. How'd you have liked it if I'd started in the circulation department, and came ringing your doorbell this morning, saying, 'Lady, we offer a saucepan, an egg-beater and a bottle of gin with each and every subscription'. . . you wouldn't care about the gin today, would you?"

Sue didn't laugh. Nap could hardly hear what she said.

"Have you fallen asleep again?" he asked. "I can't hear you. I said I can't hear you. I said . . . oh . . . Reno. You're in Reno. Well, you can't get a divorce from me; even I, in these dim morning hours, know that marriage comes first, and if I'd married you, even last night, darling, I'd know it. I . . .

"You flew there? Oh. With Pete Carlton? I seem to remember him around during the evening." Nap chuckled; Sue, naturally, was contrite, and was defending herself by attacking him. "I hope he makes an honest woman out of you."

AFTER that, as he listened, Nap motioned for a cigarette. Yee Yick, disapproving of tobacco before breakfast, looked stubbornly out of the window at San Francisco's roofs instead of moving the box within reach.

"Congratulations, Mrs. Carlton," Nap said slowly. "My only hope is that all of your children turn out to be reporters."

He'd taken Sue for granted for a good many years. Everyone knew that they were to be married. Pete Carlton knew it. Why, he, Nap Bancroft, had acted like a jackass; if Sue really wanted him to stop what he'd been doing, he should have stopped. She was probably right—about reporters. And she'd been a sweet kid and a swell companion and they got along and had fun . . . and now she was married to somebody else. She had never seemed so desirable before.

"Sue," he began. "Sue—"

A man's voice said, "And be damned. Who's after our hide now, Nap?"

Bancroft said, "Get off the line." The voice wasn't Pete Carlton's; Nap almost wished it had been, so he could tell him a few things. "Sue, darling—"

He thought he could hear her saying something, but the man began to speak again. "Excuse me for being so dumb, Nap. This is the Desk. Do we play up the story of the Ingalls-Carlton elopement or are we kind to our boss?"

Sue cut in, "Nap Bancroft, if you let them—"

"The other sheets," said George Monroe at the Sun-Bulletin's city desk, "will shoot the works on it, Nap."

Nap found himself saying, "You know what ought to be done, George. I'm just one of the hired hands." He heard Sue's exclamation, her short word to Carlton beside her at Reno, the click as she hung up. That was that. He felt like the devil. "I won't be down this morning, George," Nap said.

THE story of the Reno marriage was news. Sue Ingalls was people, Pete Carlton had been football and he, Nap, was both name and money. The opposition papers would play it up gleefully, with pictures, and repay him with interest for stories which he had broken under their noses. Even now Nap knew that he was a good reporter . . . if there was such a thing. Sue hadn't thought he was so good.

"You," his city editor informed him, "are going out for the Pryor story."

"Or the high hurdles? Solace in my work? No, thanks."

"You go, or else."

Nap made a gesture, and the Chinese servant hastily rescued the cream jug. "Or else what?" Nap demanded.

"I fire you. After which you can fire me. But it's an assignment."

Nap said slowly, "What do I do? Disguise myself as a bunch of violets and let Mrs. Pryor come out from wherever she's hiding and bury her little nose in my sweet fragrance and breathe out her secrets so the Sun-Bulletin can print it?"

"Be at the ferry in time to catch the ten-forty-five. Bring a bag. You'll be gone a day or two on this assignment."

The jilted Mr. Bancroft said, "Is it a real tip, George? D'you know where she is? And have we got it sewed up?"

"I don't want a telephone leak," Monroe said. "King goes along, for pictures. He's got the details. You do the planning. And, Nap, we're all . . . sorry as the deuce, you know."

More slowly than before, Nap said, "I'm not going. I'm through. Assign someone else. Being a reporter has cost me my . . . anyhow, send one of the other boys. I'm going to Honolulu. Or British Columbia. Or Mexico. See you in a month."

Somewhere, at what exact word Nap Bancroft didn't know, Monroe had hung up. Not that it mattered.

Yee Yick snorted, "Slausage cold. Sclamble egg cold. Nuts."

"Not for breakfast," said Nap.

"You go catch numbah-one hot stuff story?"

"No. I go catch kick in the pants. Pack my bag. I'm going to Mexico and drink tequila."

"Whisky-soda moh bettah," said Yee Yick.

Nap decided to take the car and drive.

Mrs. Pryor and the man had left the club together, without Pryor

Anywhere. He remembered how Sue had looked in the Mercury . . . and at lunch . . . and in the evening . . . and with her head on his shoulder . . . and what did he care about the Pryor story? The devil with it; with all stories. For all time.

So he was at the ferry in ample time for the ten-forty-five.

"We got the tip this morning," the cameraman, King, said. "George gave me the dope. A country correspondent saw a woman and thinks it is Pryor. He saw her a week ago, but a barn burned down and he was so busy checking the details on it that he forgot to tell the Desk."

"Where is she?"

Every newspaper was looking for the answer to that question, and the police as well. Hotels were being watched, auto camps searched, the border patrolled by deputies and highway police; planes, leaving the state, were examined, and re-examined when they landed . . . and for six days there had been no trace of the missing Rosemary Pryor.

THE Pryor story had held one page. There had been two men, one of them James Pryor, in a night club. The second man had never been identified. There had been Rosemary Pryor, who had been Miss Sierra before she met the wealthy importer. All three had taken a booth at the club, and ordered drinks. Later, Mrs. Pryor and the man had left the club together, without Pryor. Still later, a waiter had entered the booth and found James Pryor very dead, strangled with a napkin.

There had been no sign of a quarrel, nor sound of one. Pryor, according to all accounts, had seemed silent and morose. Although he had been in his middle forties, he was a powerful man, and the missing man had been slight. Pryor obviously had put up no fight for life.

No one knew who the other man was. The description of him could have involved almost anyone. No one knew who the man was except Rosemary Pryor.

The papers had theories, and each played up the angle which looked best. The Journal was positive that Pryor had been killed and robbed after his wife and the other man had left the club, and roared editorially because the police refused to round up suspicious characters. But they did this only because the paper was anti-administration and didn't want to pass up a chance to howl. The Globe believed someone had been blackmailing Mrs. Pryor, although they had no proof. A man in her past was what The Enterprise hoped for, and they succeeded in making matters difficult for several married men who hadn't been at the night club, nor seen Mrs. Pryor for several years.

THE Sun-Bulletin, printing facts, had seen street sales suffer.

"Our Rosemary," said the cameraman, "may be a smart wench. If we can believe a country correspondent, who once sent us a story about a two-headed calf, he saw her in a machine going out into the wilds. Monroe checked. That road goes nowhere, but it passes an exclusive sanitarium on the way . . .

"Here's a letter to 'em from your doctor, see? Monroe got it this morning. You've had a nervous breakdown, and your name is Newell Barton; same initials, in case you have monogrammed panties."

"You mean," said Nap, "that I'm a nut?"

"No. Just worn out. It was George's idea."

"Was it?"

"Good, eh?"

"Marvelous." Sue was right. She had been literal about reporters. Snoops. No decency. Digging up nastiness. Sarcastically, he added, "I suppose I ought to pick up a feather somewhere and put it in my hat. Then I can be Boola-boola,

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the Indian warrior, and do my tribal dance when we arrive—"

"George said you'd arrange all the details."

Nap stared at the cameraman, but King was smoking placidly. The whole affair was nonsensical. He, Nap, would have no part in it. The correspondent hadn't even seen Rosemary Pryor. Of course, if he had, and if she were at the sanitarium, she might be a very smart girl. Suppose she'd claim that she was a victim of amnesia, the I-don't-remember disease? She'd make fools of the police. It was a possibility. If Nap could prove otherwise, if he could just find her, what a whale of a story it would be!

"IF WE can't clear it up in an hour or so," Nap growled, "it's all off." He had to explain what he'd figured out. "And," he went on, "she may've been smart enough to put over this amnesia business on the doctors. She won't be able to testify. She won't know who the man is. She'll be poor Rosemary, and the feature writers will weep about her . . ."

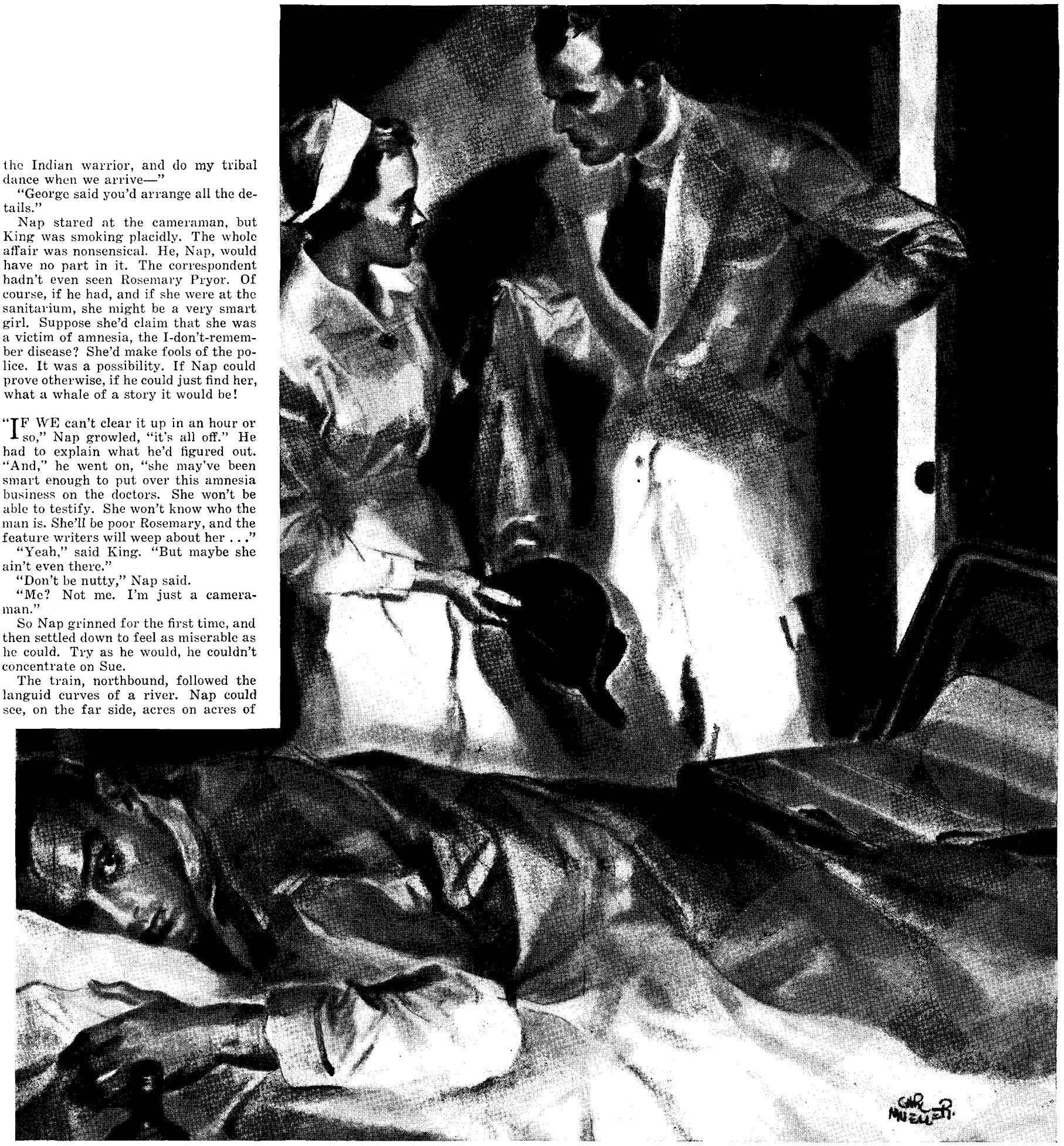
"Yeah," said King. "But maybe she ain't even there."

"Don't be nutty," Nap said.

"Me? Not me. I'm just a cameraman."

So Nap grinned for the first time, and then settled down to feel as miserable as he could. Try as he would, he couldn't concentrate on Sue.

The train, northbound, followed the languid curves of a river. Nap could see, on the far side, acres on acres of apricots and almonds in full bright leaf, an unbelievable opulence of form and color. Fruit-packing sheds slid into view, at this season shadowed and empty, with huge piles of shook waiting to be nailed into containers when the fruit ripened and was packed.



The nurse was whispering: "Look at the things he had in his bag, Doctor. I thought I shouldn't leave"

Nap didn't feel toward Sue the way the unknown man must have felt about Rosemary Pryor. Certainly not to the point of strangling Pete Carlton. Or . . . or was the story really a love-angle killing? Hang it, there he was again thinking about the mystery instead of grieving.

In the town, he arranged for the cameraman to be instantly available by telephone. He saw the Sun-Bulletin's correspondent, and agreed that if the Pryor woman was at the sanitarium perhaps the youngster would be taken on in the city room. He did a little shopping. After that he was driven out to the sanitarium, which was several miles from the town, completely isolated, with a high wall, barb-wired, surrounding it. Nap had a glimpse of narrow barred windows.

The superintendent read Nap's letter.

"We're pleased to have you here, Mr. Barton," he said. "Quiet. Hmm. You've come to the proper place. Absolutely."

"I hope so," said Nap.

"And Dr. Richardson says that the usual formalities may be passed over in your case. Good man, Richardson." He was smiling; the letter from San Francisco's fine physician, plus Nap's clothes and bag, meant that a fat bill would be promptly paid. "So, for today, Mr. Barton, we'll start with complete relaxation, eh?"

Nap's room had a heavy chair, a bedside table, a window—barred—which overlooked a garden. An attendant stood stolidly by while Nap undressed. The bed was hard; the sheets were stiff and cold. The only light was on the ceiling.

The attendant left him, and into the blop-blop of the man's feet in the corridor there was blended a quicker tapping,

(*Continued on page* 38)

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Cooking the Catch

Whether you catch your own or do your fishing in the market, fish cookery is sure to get you if you listen to the Browns, who have caught and cooked fish almost everywhere

By Rose and Bob Brown

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM STEIG

IN SEASON, Friday is twice as much fish day as in winter. Not because we eat double when they're running, but because Friday marks the beginning of the week end, when all our thoughts lightly turn to hook and sinker. Maybe not all, but pretty near, for last year 13,000,000 fish and game licenses were issued and yet only a fraction of our sea and inland waters require permits for whipping them with a line.

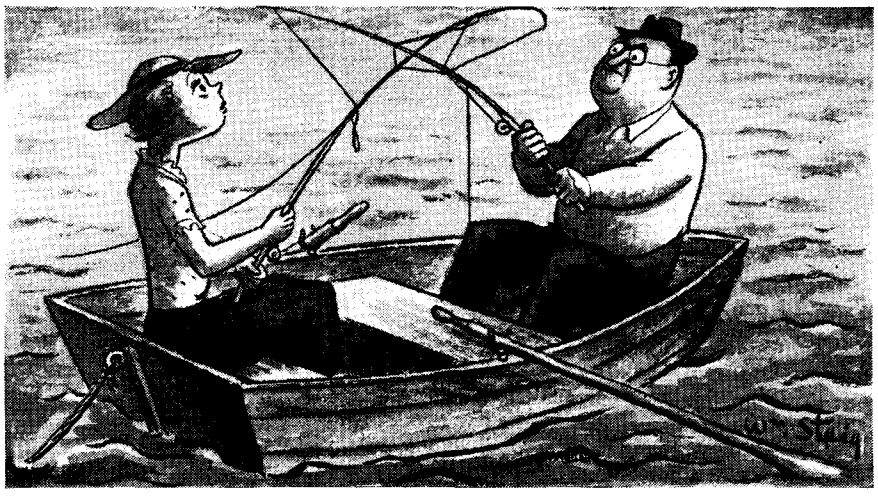
So the dawn of every holiday lights up a forest of fishing poles moving by car, bus, leg, train, boat, even airplane, to the most likely holes and shoals. Alert in spite of the hour, clear-eyed and fresh-skinned, already breathing deeply while the rest of the world snores, men and women alike (but the women only a salting of one in ten) lug their own gear and impedimenta to the casting grounds. California beaches are alive with sanddabbers; Pikes Peakers stop their yodeling to sneak up on mountain pools, fix live field mice on tiny rafts and push them slyly out into the current to lure the rainbow trout. A surfeit of surf casters, trollers, stream-wading fly flickerers.

The whir of the first cast! Splash of the first plummet! Boy! What a strike! Somebody has amateurishly left the ratchet locked on his reel and will ruin it. Alas, amateurs, like blowfish, crabs and conger eels, are always with us, getting everything tangled, trying to bait up with one of our eyes as we glare at a mere woman who just can't bear to slice a juicy bloodworm.

Of course any fisherman, or fisherwoman who can bait her own hook, can also cook the catch to epicurean perfection. So all equipment for salt or freshwater sport should be divided into three equal parts, catching kit, cooking kit and the little brown jug—or better still, dry white wine which serves as well for cooking fish as for drinking with it.

But even if you forego the first division in favor of the marketman, one of these crisp autumn days you'll find yourself hankering for a camp cooking kit. It won't be complete without bottle, skillet, grill, a long two-tined fork, a brace of lemons, plenty of bacon, a covey of onions and tomatoes, a fistful of Italian parsley (flat-leaved and tastier than the curly), some saffron, dry sage, fresh dill, capers, salt, paprika and black pepper in a grinder. And don't forget the shashlik skewers either—for what grasshoppers are to bass, fish shashlik is to you.

Squat any angler down before a brisk wood fire with a lapful of skewers, plenty of fresh-caught fish, a carving knife, and he'll know just what to do. He may never have heard of shashlik, yet instinctively he'll fillet the fish, cut it into toothsome hunks and slice bacon squares to match, alternately running them through with a skewer. Hunched over his caveman coals he'll thread on beads of bacon, fish and tomatoes in turn, as though his very life depended on it, rotating the joystick like a witch, his lips working with incantations while the juicy flesh is broiled to a blushing burnt sienna. Then he'll season it with parsley, sage or a sprinkling of fresh dill flowers, crushed.



Alas, amateurs, like blowfish, crabs and conger eels, are always with us

The Formula for Stick Fish

The experienced camp cook will vary shashlik with "stick fish" by digging a short, shallow trench about a foot deep, and making therein a sweet-smelling fire with plenty of dry hardwood. This savory ceremony begins just as soon as the blaze has died down to searing coals. Meanwhile the catch gets cleaned somehow, all gills removed, but heads left on. The skin is scored deep, and salt, pepper, chopped Italian parsley, oil, bacon grease or butter, rubbed in. A strip or two of bacon, skewered firmly in place, gives automatic basting and blessing, for most fish are too dry. All but herring and the Alaska candlefish cry for bacon.

Cut a stick for each fish, three or four feet long and as big around as a kid's eyes when he lands his first sucker. Sharpen both ends to sloping billard cue points, run the fish through from the gaping mouth, along the belly cavity and out by the backbone as near as you can to the tail. The fish must be slid down until firmly impaled, for it's almost as tragic to let it fall off into the fire as to lose it overboard. Jab the other stick point deep in the ground at the trench edge, to bring the thickest part of the meat closest to the coals. The stick must be slightly inclined so no heat is wasted, and space left for occasional turning.

If the cook really knows his stuff he'll heave in a bale of sage at the finish to smother the panting coals and send up a cloud of celestial incense that permeates the broilers all the way to the wishbone and gives just that added zest. It's the trick of the Marseilles fishercooks who send broiled *merlan* or mackerel sizzling to the table in a scented shroud of sage smoke.

Of course if you want really to go native you'll barbecue. First scoop out a hole bigger than the fish. Line it with stones or just wet and tamp down the earth as in the old family recipe for mud pies. Pile up a regular election bonfire and heap on big flattish stones to heat for a few hours. Clean the fish and remove the gills, but leave heads and scales on. Do a little interior decorating with the pepper grinder, salt shaker, chopped parsley and herbs, dash with lemon juice or white wine and fold in a slice of bacon and a sliver of onion thin as a platinum watch. Then back to your mud pies. Mix up a nice batter and hold all openings of the fish shut so the mud won't get inside while you plaster him thickly. The job is finished when the fish resembles a clay pigeon.

Rake the oven hole clean, put the clay fish at the bottom, cover with earth and the red-hot stones, rebuild the fire over all and keep it going as long as hunger permits. When finally you crack open the clay molds, scales and skin stay with them and you have the fullest flavored fish you ever tasted.

Getting the Wood Flavor

Next to shad, the best plank fish are blues and trout still flipping from the sea, and bass, big or little mouth, from the lake. The plank must be of hardwood—oak, ash or hickory are the best—and at least a foot and a half long and a foot wide to bed the biggest fish, which in this method are the best. Like the wooden salad bowl, the plank improves with use. And the way to use it is simple: split the fish from head to tail, then cut them off, and plank the carcass skin-side-down with care. Douse with lemon juice or white wine, season with salt, freshly ground pepper and minced parsley. Brush with melted butter, tie the fish tight to the plank so it won't slip off and tilt up before live coals or slide under a grill for a quarter of an hour. The wood does something to it.

Pike is too dry a fish to plank unless it be liberally larded. The best way to treat a pike is to bake it. Stuff it with piquant anchovies, the salted kind that come in tins and must be soaked and filleted before using; or fill with bland

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The fisherman cooking his own seldom takes time for chefs' tricks

The job is finished when the fish resembles a clay pigeon

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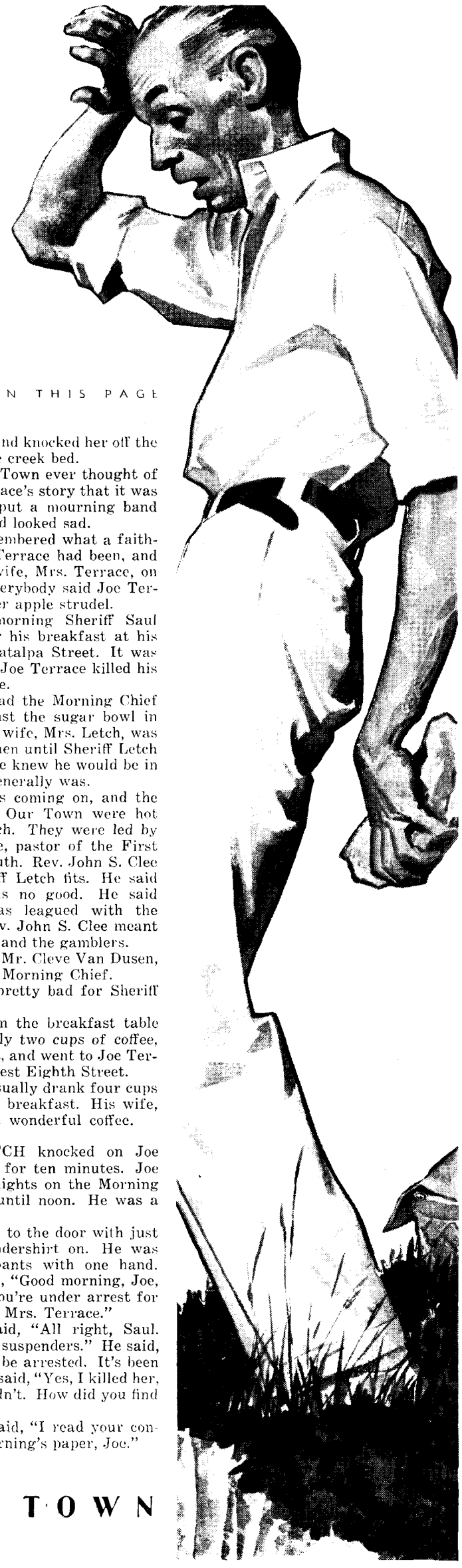
Joe Terrace

By Damon Runyon



Joe Terrace took his wife out to Lover's Leap and got her to look over the cliff. While she was looking he knocked her off down into the creek bed

A SHORT SHORT STORY COMPLETE ON THIS PAGE

JOE TERRACE killed his wife, Mrs. Terrace.

He never liked her very much.

Joe Terrace was a linotype operator on the Morning Chief.

He was a mighty good man at his trade.

He rarely made a typographical error. He was so accurate that Bob Frater, the proofreader on the Morning Chief, seldom bothered to read proof on Joe Terrace.

Bob Frater once won five dollars from Saul Letch by betting him Joe Terrace wouldn't make a typographical error in six months.

This was when Saul Letch was a printer on the Morning Chief and before he was elected sheriff. Mr. Cleve Van Dusen, Sr., owner of the Morning Chief, got Saul elected sheriff. Mr. Cleve Van Dusen, Sr., always liked to have his own man in the sheriff's office. He liked to have his own men in all the other offices, too.

Joe Terrace thought he was pretty slick about the way he killed his wife, Mrs. Terrace.

He planned it for twenty years.

The first ten years he couldn't think of how to do it. He was a slow thinker. The second ten he got it all worked out.

Every Sunday and holiday when the weather was nice Joe Terrace would take his wife, Mrs. Terrace, on a little outing into the hills northwest of Our Town.

Mrs. Terrace hated outings. She hated hills. The sand fleas got into her stockings.

She was a short, fat woman, and very good-natured. She always tried to please her husband, Joe Terrace. He called her Tubby. She went on the outings because she thought he liked them. She didn't know he was planning to kill her. It would have upset Mrs. Terrace.

Joe Terrace always took her to a place in the hills called Lover's Leap. It was a cliff a hundred feet high over a rocky creek bed. It was called Lover's Leap because a couple of lovers were supposed to have jumped off the cliff to their death years ago.

There are fifty thousand Lover's Leaps in the United States, and the story about them all is exactly the same. It is very strange that so many lovers jumped off cliffs together.

On Memorial Day, Joe Terrace took his wife, Mrs. Terrace, out to Lover's Leap and got her to look over the cliff. While she was looking, he hit her on the head with a rock and knocked her off the cliff down into the creek bed.

Nobody in Our Town ever thought of doubting Joe Terrace's story that it was an accident. He put a mourning band around his hat and looked sad.

Everybody remembered what a faithful husband Joe Terrace had been, and how he took his wife, Mrs. Terrace, on those outings. Everybody said Joe Terrace must miss her apple strudel.

One Monday morning Sheriff Saul Letch was having his breakfast at his home on South Catalpa Street. It was over a year after Joe Terrace killed his wife, Mrs. Terrace.

Sheriff Letch had the Morning Chief propped up against the sugar bowl in front of him. His wife, Mrs. Letch, was hiding in the kitchen until Sheriff Letch left the house. She knew he would be in bad humor. He generally was.

An election was coming on, and the church people of Our Town were hot after Sheriff Letch. They were led by Rev. John S. Clee, pastor of the First M. E. Church, South. Rev. John S. Clee was giving Sheriff Letch fits. He said Sheriff Letch was no good. He said Sheriff Letch was leagued with the forces of evil. Rev. John S. Clee meant the saloonkeepers and the gamblers.

He didn't mean Mr. Cleve Van Dusen, Sr., owner of the Morning Chief.

Things looked pretty bad for Sheriff Letch.

He got up from the breakfast table after drinking only two cups of coffee, and put on his hat, and went to Joe Terrace's house on West Eighth Street.

Sheriff Letch usually drank four cups of coffee with his breakfast. His wife, Mrs. Letch, made wonderful coffee.

SHERIFF LETCH knocked on Joe Terrace's door for ten minutes. Joe Terrace worked nights on the Morning Chief, and slept until noon. He was a sound sleeper.

He finally came to the door with just his pants and undershirt on. He was holding up his pants with one hand. Sheriff Letch said, "Good morning, Joe, come with me. You're under arrest for killing your wife, Mrs. Terrace."

Joe Terrace said, "All right, Saul. Wait till I get my suspenders." He said, "I'm not sorry to be arrested. It's been on my mind." He said, "Yes, I killed her, Saul. I wish I hadn't. How did you find out?"

Sheriff Letch said, "I read your confession in this morning's paper, Joe."

Joe Terrace said that couldn't be, because he hadn't made any confession; and Sheriff Letch showed him Rev. John S. Clee's sermon in the Morning Chief. The Morning Chief always published all the sermons delivered in the churches Sunday in full. Mr. Van Dusen, Sr., said it was good for business with the church people.

In the middle of Rev. John S. Clee's sermon, where he was talking about the Lord forgiving sinners, was a line that said, "Please, Lord, forgive me for what I did to Tubby."

This line had no relation to the rest of the sermon.

It didn't make sense.

Joe Terrace pleaded guilty to murder in the second degree, and Judge Dixony gave him fifty-five years in the penitentiary.

Some said it wasn't enough.

WHEN it came out how Sheriff Letch discovered Joe Terrace's guilt by reading Rev. John S. Clee's sermon, the church people of Our Town said Sheriff Letch couldn't be such a bad man if he read sermons.

Rev. John S. Clee took back what he said about Sheriff Letch being leagued with the forces of evil, and went around making campaign speeches for Sheriff Letch.

He said Sheriff Letch was all right.

Mr. Cleve Van Dusen, Sr., put an editorial in the Morning Chief, saying that it was a wonderful thing for Our Town to have a man in office of the high spiritual character of Sheriff Letch.

Sheriff Letch was re-elected by a large plurality.

He never mentioned that he knew Joe Terrace always set up the sermons for the Morning Chief, and of course Sheriff Letch never made it public that he had been reading the sermons every Monday morning for two years only because he was always hoping to catch Joe Terrace in a typographical error so he could win his five dollars back from Bob Frater.

Sheriff Letch told his friends that he figured a linotype operator's attention was more apt to wander when he was setting up sermons than on any other kind of copy, and especially Rev. John S. Clee's sermons because they were so dull.

It is a curious thing that nobody else in Our Town noticed that typographical error before Sheriff Letch brought it up, not even Rev. John S. Clee.

A TALE OF OUR TOWN

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT O. REID

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The Barber of the Bantua

Ottorino Pascal settles an ancient grudge—a story of nobility well tested

By Jacland Marmur

IT IS in odd strange moments that the true nature of a man reveals itself. Curiously enough, it is most often an instant's glance, a gesture, a single word rather than some bright, heroic deed. Sailors understand this: it is their instinct. Your genuine seafarer is not befuddled by the pomp and ceremony of professional heroism. He knows it for nonsense. A man's real gauge is measured in a flash when, in response to some unsuspected stimulus, the hidden spring bubbles up in one clear well—and instantly disappears.

Harry Martin, who was second mate of the steamer Bantua, was privileged to see such a moment in the life of a man and a woman, and something of the superficial actions that led to it. What he made of it he never said, because Mr. Martin was a quiet man, an efficient sailor with the mark of a shipmaster on him, and a friend of Ottorino Pascal, the ship's barber.

Ottorino was more than a barber. He was a gentleman of sorts, with genuine dignity and an old-school charm. Calm, serene, he was something of an exquisite on shore with his gold-headed cane and his bowler hat, enjoying the quiet pleasures of an evening in a foreign port with the air of a philosopher-artist on holiday. His little eyes held a perpetual twinkle, as if the antics of humankind stirred in him a faintly sardonic humor. It took time to get so foreign-sounding a name, and the little, clipped brown beard he affected. But Harry Martin knew at once that he wasn't nearly as old as he seemed and that, in spite of his superior dignity—which silly people invariably resented—he was one of them. They were friends. So the second officer understood it better than anyone else. Except Celeste. But he kept his peace.

IT ALL happened on a westward passage out of Batavia when the Bantua was homeward bound—in the season of the southwest monsoon—via Suez and the Mediterranean ports. She was far from being a liner, the gray-hulled Bantua with the broad white streak along her sheer and her two cargo masts raking saucily aft. Her main business was hauling the freight of the world, but she picked up a stray bit of change for her owners with her twenty-odd passenger cabins in a large and roomy 'midship house. Of course, the tourists stayed clear of her, because she had "seen the world" many times over, knew to whom it belonged, and had other work to do. Yet to discriminating travelers and hardheaded sailors she was known as a home ship, comfortable and well found.

And with Tanjong Priok Harbor clear toward evening of a wet, hot, squally day, the Bantua was plunging through the Sunda Strait against a racing tide and a freshening gale. It made her bounce. Each time she nosed down into one of those Indian Ocean combers, she swept the spray along her foredeck and sheeted it up almost to her pouring funnel lip. She drained it off easily enough, foaming; and the green jungled islands of the Strait kept rocking between heaven and sea with her roll and pitch. But it didn't bother Ottorino Pascal one bit in his little shop on the after deck. He was used to it. And he was calmly about his business of preparing to shave a man reclining in his chair when Harry Martin came in.

The barber, dressing his strop, raised jovial little eyes to the second mate. They seemed clouded with some inner trouble, but Harry thought it was probably because he had heard somehow about the ship's surgeon's quiet passing. "This, Mr. Martin," Ottorino said in a softly gracious voice, "this is Dr. Clay Thaddeus, the famous bacteriologist. He has just joined us in Batavia for a holiday voyage home. *The* Doctor Thaddeus, sir!"

Mr. Martin grinned vaguely. A deep growl issued from beneath the steaming towel, and a sound like a pronounced, "Bah!"

OTTORINO removed the towel with a skillful professional flip and went on with his work. "I have been telling the good doctor," he murmured, "about the Sunda Skipper, whose enraged howling is so plain tonight. But he doesn't believe such sailors' tales. He says, Mr. Martin, he says it is only the wind in the gear."

The second officer grinned again. "Oh, it's true enough, sir. Something like fifty years ago, you see, a Salem ship full of pepper and gum tried to beat through the Strait against the Sunda stream and a southwest gale. Skipper swore he'd work her through come hell or high water. He was standing on his fo'c'sle head bellowing orders through his brass trumpet and cursing like all get out when a sea—a big green fellow—came along and plucked him overboard. That's the last they saw of him. But he's been here ever since to pay his blasphemous debt to the South Sea god. You can hear him all through this monsoon, if you listen with a sailor's ear, howling and swearing for a slant and trying to work the Yankee through. Don't know as he ever will. But they say if you hear him, you're bound to meet someone you knew long years ago. . . . That right, Otto?"

Ottorino Pascal started perceptibly. "That's right, Harry. . . . And I heard him. I heard him as plain as day."

The famous bacteriologist raised his head for a moment. It was a fine massive head with snowy hair and the cool calculating eyes of a scientific man. His thin lips smiled wanly. "You seagoing chaps," he murmured, "always try to give a traveler his money's worth; don't you?"

He sank back against the headrest and closed his eyes to dismiss it as a pleasant nonsense. Mr. Martin shrugged idly and sat down on the settee. He had come to tell Ottorino about Doc Spear, and he would have to wait. So he remained there, leaning against the throbbing bulkhead with lowered lids, watching his friend curiously. There was something strange about him tonight. He didn't seem at his ease. Reflected in the mirrors, his face was strained with hard puckers about those usually genial eyes, and his thinly delicate fingers trembled a little. It was very strange, Harry thought. Very strange. But perhaps it

"I have every faith," Celeste said firmly, "every faith in his skill. I demand that you allow him—order him—to operate!"

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was only the wind and the shrill voice of the Sunda Skipper beating through the Strait.

Pascal worked in silence for several moments. Then, suddenly running his fingers across the partially shaved chin of the doctor, he drew erect. He looked imposing somehow, in his snow-white smock, with his aquiline face, his eyes alight and the fingers of one hand spread in a characteristic gesture.

"I was thinking of a fable, Doctor," he murmured.

"Another?" The doctor opened one eye, amused. "You are a fabulous barber, I should say."

"I was thinking of the story of Napoleon and his barber. You know it?"

"Of course."

"Well, sir, I was thinking how, like Napoleon beneath the razor of that barber, you are utterly in *my* power now." Harry Martin looked up at this, startled. He sensed a hidden intensity beneath the idle words, something violent. He had an instant of horror. But Ottorino smiled abruptly. "If you, for instance, Doctor, were the man I hated most in the world, it would be a simple matter to . . ."

Doctor Thaddeus closed his eyes serenely. "Like Napoleon," he said gravely, "I understand quite well that scoundrels are safest in the hands of honest men. I am not frightened. You may shave away. Besides all that, I am not a general, and have murdered nothing in my life but bugs, bacteria, germs. As one craftsman to another, then," he finished dryly, "I should like to get shaved before dinner."

Ottorino Pascal smiled appreciatively. "Quite so," he agreed, working deftly and quickly. "We have, when you think of it, very much in common. It is largely why I chose this profession. Before ever there were doctors, there were barbers. In fact, sir, as you probably know, not so very many years ago, if a barber was not also surgeon, blood-letter, bonesetter, dentist, and medical advisor—why, he was nothing at all. You see in me the artist who really founded your science."

A turn of the doctor's head brought his eye in Mr. Martin's direction, and he closed it and opened it in a broad wink. But Harry wasn't bemused. He was listening intently. There was an undercurrent to this that had meaning. He knew it! Ottorino Pascal was no blathering fool. He didn't talk nonsense. But the doctor evidently thought otherwise, for he winked again, and his thin lips twitched with amusement.

"You are then, I take it, an artist?"

"Indeed! What else?" Ottorino wanted to know. "All men are artists, good or bad, creating the things without which they cannot live. When the last artist shall have died, civilization will end." He plucked off the white sheet with a flourish. His eyes were a cold sardonic blue. "There you are, sir." He bowed. "I shall charge it? To Cabin 14?"

DOCTOR THADDEUS looked at him, a sharp swift glance, and only nodded. Then he went out. Ottorino remained standing stiffly in the center of his little shop, catching the reflected light of the mirrors all about him, the point of his beard in the air. A box of chocolate bars slipped along its shelf with the vessel's pitch, but he paid it no heed. He simply stood there, the white cloth dragging the deck as he swayed a little to the Bantua's labor. Harry Martin stood up, puzzled, somewhat startled, a little amazed. The second officer sensed he had witnessed something unusual which he did not understand because he hadn't the key. The barber said nothing. Harry coughed.

"Otto," he murmured at last, "I've been waiting to tell you. Doc Spear, the ship's surgeon, you know: he's gone. Went out quietly, sitting in his chair at his desk. Steward found him half an hour ago when he went in with the old fellow's hot chocolate. Thought he was asleep at first. But he wasn't . . . Otto! Do you hear me?"

The barber smiled oddly. "Oh, yes, Harry; yes. I hear you. He was very old, Harry. He expected it."

"Yes. Captain Delanty won't hear of putting back to set him ashore in Batavia. The old fellow often said he'd like to be buried at sea and the skipper reckons it's the least he can do for an old shipmate. You were his friend and I thought you'd like to be there. Tomorrow morning after the middle watch's gone, Otto. Before dawn. Very quiet, you know. No need to spread it around."

"Yes, Harry; of course."

"I'll send a man along to rouse you out."

"Yes, Harry. Thanks. I'll—"

Ottorino stopped speaking abruptly. A young woman had come up. They hadn't heard her in the passageway until she stood in the doorway, one hand pressed to the bulkhead against the quick motions of the plunging ship.

"I'm sorry." She smiled brightly. "I was looking for my father. I thought he might be in here. Doctor Thaddeus?"

"He has just left, Miss," Harry said. "You will probably find him—"

"Otto!"

SHE stepped over the weatherboard into the little shop, a movement rapid and startling. The second officer saw the quick flame of recognition come into her eyes. There was in the swift motion of her, in the carriage of her head, the gesture of her hand, the grace and poise of full maturity. And yet for all of it a certain girlishness, an eager intensity, as if she had waited patiently for a moment such as this for a very long while, certain it would come to her in its proper time. She was dressed in blue, pale flimsy blue which accentuated the rush of color to her white throat and face. She had forgotten completely the presence of the second officer. He did not exist for her. And she said Pascal's name again in a low, firm voice.

"Otto!"

The barber of the Bantua had not stirred. Only the white cloth of his trade, released from his hand, dropped to the deck and lay at his feet in slowly flattening folds. His heavy breathing was very plain in the little shop, and the hissing spatter of a boarding sea. He reached out and touched the white porcelain of his chair for support.

"You must surely be mistaken, Miss," he said in a strange gruff voice Mr. Martin did not recognize. "I am only the ship's barber."

The young woman with the figure and face of a girl smiled at him and shook her small head as much as to say his beard and the patient years between did not matter to her at all. Harry Martin had again that overwhelming feeling of being in the presence of some deeply moving force beyond his understanding.

"I'll send a man along to rouse you in time," he mumbled over his shoulder again, because he could think of nothing better to say. And he went out and away and left those two alone.

He said nothing about it to anyone. But all through the wet and starlit middle watch, long after the loom of Java Head went under and the Indian Ocean slapped the ship in darkness, it kept pounding in his mind. He couldn't help wondering what it meant.

Directly after eight bells were made, a little group in spotless white gathered aft on the poop. There wasn't much light as yet, only a pearl-gray radiance that crept stealthily above the eastern board to spread liquidly over the heaving sea.

The shrouded shape of the ship's doctor lay close to the rail, with a sailor on

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"I stopped in there about that time. We got her to a hospital"

Bread into Roses

By Kathleen Norris

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The Story Thus Far:

FOR a few brief years after her brilliant marriage to Alec Hazeltyne, Susannah Farjeon is happy. Alec has everything a woman could desire—personality, position, wealth—and, until Merle Sargent comes into his life, devotion for his beautiful wife. Sanna's baby—a girl—has just been born when the Hazeltynes meet Merle—a talented girl of nineteen, half Russian, half English. Sanna likes her, and Alec assists her in getting a start on the New York concert stage. But, apparently, he is actuated by something more than mere kindness, because Sanna feels a rift growing between them. . . .

In vain she fights against the increasing fear that she will lose Alec. In their set it is considered smart to engage in flirtations, but Sanna is too honest, too proud, to salve her wounded feelings by reprisals of this sort. She tells Ross St. Hubert, a much sought-after painter who has done her portrait, as much when he confesses his love for her. St. Hubert replies that he will always be waiting if she needs him. And, despite herself, Sanna finds she is grateful for his words.

The situation between Alec and Sanna grows daily more desperate. It finally reaches the point when, sick with misery, she hears Alex asking her for a divorce. She refuses; she points out that he is old enough to be Merle Sargent's father; that he has his own infant girl—and boy, by another marriage—to consider. Alec doesn't insist; he respects Sanna too much to force the issue. He quietly removes his effects from her room and they resume the cheerless, unhappy routine of life. . . .

Then comes the day when Sanna, alone in her drawing-room, hears Merle Sargent announced. It is the moment she has been dreading, but, stonily, she receives the girl. Merle has grown older since their last meeting. There is no doubt that she, too, has suffered.

"Sanna," she says, "this is the hardest thing I've ever done. I've come to ask you to give him up. It is destroying us all, Sanna, and—and you've got to see it our way!"

Sanna looks at her icily. "I prefer," she says, "to discuss this thing alone with Alec. . . ."

For a little while, after Merle has gone, Susannah Hazeltyne thinks she will die. . . .

V

AFTER a while Susannah was in her room, sitting vaguely at her dressing table; a clock said seven, and Liza came in, discreet and lightfooted, to say that Mr. Hazeltyne had telephoned that he would be late at the office because day after tomorrow would be Christmas, and they were finishing some work.

Day after tomorrow would be Christmas, of course. On a long table, specially placed in her room, packages were piled with silver papers and dark electric-blue satin ribbons. Susannah had decided, in some hour that had held infinitely more energy than she could command now, upon blue and silver for Christmas wrappings. She began to segregate the various gifts: tortoise shell, silver, crystal, silver again. She took them out of delicate papers and sturdy little flannelette bags and clean fine boxes and marked them and tied them, and put them back again. Silver cherries decorated Connie's; two little silver deer were tied saucily and tightly to Margot's. The packages looked beautiful when Liza began to stack them, ready for delivery tomorrow.

"Shall I bring you all those from the closet, Mrs. Hazeltyne?"

"Yes. What is it? I didn't hear you, Liza."

"While you're at dinner would you like me to get all the others down?"

"Dinner? Why, what time is it? I'm not dressed."

"Frost announced it about fifteen minutes ago, Mrs. Hazeltyne."

"Oh. I'll wash my hands. I thought—I was thinking of something else."

She sat in a stupor over her soup. Tomorrow would be Christmas Eve. It was a bitter, dark, cold night outside. But high up here in the penthouse there were warmth and tempered light; pink roses sprawled in crystal on the table, pink candles, flanking them in crystal candlesticks, burned bravely. Wind was howling over the roof.

"YOU don't care for your soup, Madame?"

"No; take it away, Frost, thank you." The little oyster dish, whatever it was, bubbled hotly in its silver ramekin. Delicious, for she tasted it, and crumpled the slim, crisp, hot rolls. Salad glistening with oil, Delia's incomparable cold boiled chicken, just enough of everything to be tempting, to make one wonder if it *was* enough. A cool frozen thing in a glass, orange or grapefruit and persimmon and some liquor, appetizing beyond words. Susannah mussed it with her spoon, smiled an apology at Frost and found her eyes filled with tears. She went quickly back to her package wrapping, and Liza followed her there with a small cup of hot coffee.

"Oh, thank you, Liza," Susannah said thickly, very busy with pasters and ribbons and tissue papers. Her hands got sticky and soiled with paste; she stooped at her desk to write "To Evelina's Gran, with Evelina's love and her mother's," and felt her back on fire. She and Alec would have dinner with his mother on Christmas night; an ordeal, but not to be escaped. She would take Evelina to spend Christmas afternoon with her grandmother, and Mrs. Hazeltyne senior would explain that she had sent out for the dinner, very much easier and twice as delicious.

At eleven o'clock everything was marked and tied and embellished to the last stage of perfection. Liza, loyal and sleepy and admiring, cleared away the scraps and cuttings, and the Christmas gifts stood in a pyramid of glory in the firelight; big ones, little ones, everyone remembered.

SUSANNAH took a hot bath, brushed her hair, opened a window to the sweet piercing night air that cut through the smells of paper and wintergreen gum and crushed peppermints and spilled perfumes like a knife. She got into bed, and steadfastly moved her eyes from line to line of her book; she was wide awake at twelve o'clock when Alec came quietly in, and she called him.

He came at once to her doorway, looking tired and a little surprised, and she spoke to him somewhat confusedly, having not planned beforehand exactly what she meant to say.

"Did you get some dinner?"

"Caskey and this fellow from Cincinnati and I had a steak at Tony's."

She did not believe it, but she could question and he asseverate whatever he chose indefinitely. She patted the side of her bed.

"Alec, come sit here. I want to talk."

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"Wait until I get rid of my coat. I'll come back. It's beginning to sleet and I'm all wet."

"Didn't you have your car?" She could see the water glistening on his coat, sure enough. That much was true. She lay listening to the rattle of doors and the creaking of dresser drawers in his dressing-room; her heart beating hard. He would not see it, but it gave her courage to know that she never had looked any lovelier than she did now in her laces and pillows, the cunningly knotted little satin ribbons of her nightgown, the rosy shadows of her low lamp.

Alec, in pajamas and dressing-gown, came back. He did not sit down on her bed as she had invited him, but on a chair a few feet away.

"Dead," he said simply, as an indication that he was not ready for a long talk. She noticed that he looked pale and tired.

"I know you're dead." Susannah felt the membranes of nose and throat tickle as she began; she steadied herself and managed a smile. "Alec," she said, very simply, "why have you stopped loving me?"

"Why do you talk like that?" he countered, speaking in the same controlled key she had used, but with a note of resentment. They looked at each other for a brief second; then Alec averted his eyes again.

"Because, if it's my fault, surely there's something I can do about it, dear," Susannah said.

SHE was trembling within. But it was not with fear. It was with a wild triumph that she had gotten this far, that she had dared to face him with her questions at last.

"Surely," she said, "it's not fair to let me be as lonely—as bewildered as I've been all day and as I was tonight without giving me some reason for it."

"I wish I knew the reason," he mumbled, looking away.

"We've been so happy together," Susannah pursued, swallowing tears now, blinking and smiling over them. "Surely it isn't all going to end like this? There's no quarrel between us, Alec."

"Oh, God, no, there's no quarrel!"

"Then what *is* it? Why can't I get at it? Why can't we talk it over, and see what is the best thing to do?"

"It's not as simple as that," he said after a pause.

"I don't think it's simple. I know how much you—how deeply you care for her, and how she worships you," Susannah presently went on. "She was here today; she told me. I was terrible to her—I couldn't stand it. Whatever—whatever you and I decide, it—it stunned me to have her walk in here, into my house, where I was playing with Evelina—

"I don't know what I said to her, really, except that there was nothing to say, that I didn't want to talk to her."

Alec sat quiet in his chair, his eyes far away, his locked fingers dropped between his knees.

"She shouldn't have done that, Alec."

"She's a strange child," he said. "She's only nineteen, after all, and I suppose there's Russian fire in her. I've just come from the hospital, Sanna. I've been with her since eight o'clock. She tried to kill herself."

Susannah could only sit staring at him, paralyzed with horror. She tried to speak and failed; her mouth was dry and she felt ice water on her spine.

"She's all right now. She opened her eyes; she knew me," Alec went on. "It was a close call; they made a transfusion at about half past eight, and they were all ready for another at ten. But she had rallied so well that Stern didn't think it was necessary. I just telephoned now while I was undressing, and she's sleeping quietly. She cut her wrists."

"Tonight!" Susannah heard her own whisper against a background of night stillness and tapping rain.

"About six, the hall man said. A waiter from the grill across the street had taken her up a cup of coffee half an hour earlier, and it just happened that he had to check in his tray and coffeepot and whatever it was. It's a rule. So he went up, knocked and thought he heard a kind of sighing noise."

ALEC stopped short, straightening his back against his chair, putting one hand tightly against his eyes.

"I stopped in there about that time," he presently added, still in a low tone of reluctance and shock. "We got her to a hospital and I got Stern. It was tight going for a few minutes, but we brought her round, and she opened her eyes and knew me.

"She was sunk down under the sheet," Alec continued, as Susannah found nothing to say; "she'd been sick—nauseated, I mean, and she had on the hospital nightgown. They hadn't dared move her to clean her up, and she looked like a child; she looked no more than seven years old when she opened her eyes," he went on, thinking only of what he was saying, with small consciousness of his hearer. "My poor little girl, my poor little girl!"

"Alec," Susannah said, finding voice and anger at once, "she is nothing to you! Can't you see the absurdity—the *ridiculousness* of a man in your position following a young girl—being seen with her continually? I'm sorry for tonight. It's shocking; it's horrible. But balanced women don't do things like that—come to see women in their own homes to ask—to demand—them to give up everything they have, and then rush off to cut their wrists. I am here with my child and my name and my home and my position, and she steps in to dramatize—yes, and enjoy dramatizing!—her feeling for you, and then does a thing like this. Why, there would be no civilization—there would be nothing—"

She stopped. The look of gray misery in his face did not change. He was staring haggardly into space; he came back to the moment and the conversation with a deep sigh.

"Alec, play fair with me," Susannah pleaded. "Put yourself for one moment into my place."

"Oh, I try to. I try to!" he said, almost absentmindedly. A telephone in his dressing-room rang and he was instantly beside it. "Yes, yes, yes," Susannah heard him say quickly and nervously. And then, in a tone of relief: "Oh, thank you, Miss—Miss—thank you very much. You telephoned Doctor Stern? I'll be in the first thing in the morning. Thank you."

HE CAME back, spoke simply: "Everything fine. She said Merle hadn't stirred, and that the pulse has been gaining very slowly but steadily. What a miracle transfusion is! My God, what a miracle! Life—that's what it is—put from one person into another. Cancel whatever we're doing tomorrow night, will you, Sanna, and the night afterward too."

"The night after is Christmas night, Alec," she said. "We're to be with your mother. I'm taking Evelina to Margot's tree tomorrow afternoon, and we are dining here alone. Christmas Eve."

"Ah, well, that doesn't matter then," Alec said, absorbed in his own thoughts. "Well!" he murmured, departing toward his own room, "now perhaps I can sleep. Whew-w! I feel as if I'd been dragged through a wringer since this afternoon. Good night."

"Good night," Susannah said, holding herself quiet. For a long time after he left her she lay without moving, her lip lightly bitten, her eyes narrowed, her breath coming shallow and fast.

At eleven o'clock everything was marked and tied and embellished

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It was on New Year's Eve that he told her that he was going away. The days between that time and the night of Merle's attempted suicide had been dead days for Susannah. They had passed in a dark dream. She had moved about among the shadows of her beautiful home, the costly rugs and lamps and chairs; she had sat at the exquisitely appointed table like a person under an evil spell. There had been a ghastly Christmas dinner in the senior Mrs. Hazeltyne's handsome apartment; on all sides there had been presents and bells and tinsel and shop windows trimmed with silver and scarlet; voices had said "Merry Christmas, Sanna!" and she had heard her own voice echoing "Merry Christmas!" But none of it had been real.

Alec had all but lived at the hospital where Merle was slowly coming back to life. He had appeared at his mother's table for Christmas dinner in a mood of abstraction too deep to be broken, had roused himself for a few perfunctory monosyllables, had left early in the evening with a muttered explanation of headache; he had said he felt "rotten."

On the following morning Susannah, hearing him moving about in his dressing-room at eight o'clock, had called him into her room.

And then, as well as she could remember and follow the course of the imaginary conversation she had been having with him for despairing days and days, she had talked to him. Quietly at first; then the force of her own eloquence, the strength of her case had finally stirred her to bitter feeling and to tears.

"Don't cry, Sanna," he had said more than once in sympathy and impatience. It was as if he blamed her for not bearing better a misfortune which equally affected them all, for not facing more courageously a crisis for which he was no more to blame than she.

And on New Year's Eve, after silent days when the somber winter world wrapped in cold had seemed a fitting setting for the icy misery of her feelings, he had said quietly that he was moving to his club.

"When?" Susannah had asked dully.

"Today," he had said.

SHE was in Evelina's room late in the afternoon, sitting beside the spattered high chair in which Evelina was squirming and shouting, when he came to the doorway.

"Sanna," Alec said. Susannah, frightened, yet not believing that the moment had come, not knowing what she believed or what was happening, got quickly to her feet and went out with him into the hallway. "Goodby, my dear," he said quickly and quietly. For one moment his arms were about her and he kissed her lightly on the hair. "Kiss the baby for me," he added, and was gone. . . .

Silence. Silence. After a few days Susannah wondered if it would drive her melancholy mad. Drawn irresistibly to the telephone, she called Alec's club. Mr. Hazeltyne had gone with friends to Nassau. Young Potts at the office cheerfully told her the same story. She telephoned the hospital, disguising her voice from the possible suspicion of the nurse, who could not by any chance have known it, and asked for Miss Sargent. Miss Sargent had left the hospital a few hours earlier.

"Now, I'll tell you what you'll have to do, Sanna," Margot Fielding said seriously. "You'll lose your mind, this way. Other women—other wives have had the same thing to face, and have weathered it. It happens. Just go on with your life as best you can. Tell people anything. That Alec's in Europe, or that he's in Florida, or anything. Some of them will know exactly what's going on, everyone'll talk of it behind your back, but nobody'll face you down, and in a few months he'll be so sick of the whole thing that he'll creep back. And then you can make up your mind that you're going to forgive him or not going to forgive him."

"Forgive him?" Susannah echoed, her lips trembling, her eyes suddenly brimming with tears. "But I love him! If Alec wanted me I'd *always* forgive him. I've no life, outside of my life with him. My room seems so empty—invitations seem so dead. I've nothing, except Evelina. I can't talk to her! She's too little, thank God, to know anything about it!"

"BUT, Sanna," Margot said, "that's exactly where you make your mistake. We can't afford to depend for happiness on anyone else; it always spells trouble."

"How can I help it, Margot? Alec's the most wonderful person I ever met in my life. You don't know what it is to miss him, having had it all, having had him to talk to, to go about with!"

Susannah stopped, choked. Presently she dried her eyes and cleared her voice.

"He's given me almost all the happiness I ever had," she went on. "Most women don't have hours of it. I've had months and years! Loving him and having him love me, belonging to him, having his arms about me. That's been—elixir. That's been heaven, Margot, and he can't—he can't seem any less to me just because a Russian—a Russian *cat*—"

"Yes—get mad—call her names!" Margot put in, laughing. Susannah laughed ruefully, too.

"You think I ought to buck up, Margot, and wear clothes, and go places?"

"I do. It's the only way. I suppose she's with him in Nassau."

"I don't know."

"Well, whether she is or not he'll hear about you, sooner or later. You've got money and looks and friends. Capitalize on them. That's what Alec admired first; not stringy hair and a red nose and reproaches."

"It's never been that," Susannah said with dignity.

"Well, you told me you cried so those last days that you couldn't talk. Pull yourself together, Sanna. Be seen places. Talk to the men Alec knows, so that they'll wonder what on earth was the matter with him. That's the way to fight it. He doesn't want a divorce any more than you do. He just doesn't want to fail Merle because, in that lovely English voice of hers and with those Russian eyes, she's flattering him within an inch of his life."

"Dorothy's party, do you think?"

"Certainly go to Dorothy's party, and have your photograph taken with what's-his-name, the fascinating Captain Eckles. Treat Alec's performance as the—the whim of a crazy man!" Margot said, snipping off a strand of blue baby wool definitely, and holding a small square blanket up for final inspection. "Lord, I wish they stayed little like this!" she murmured.

"See, lady! That's what you get for sneaking up and yelling 'Be careful!'"

KIRK STILES

"ROSS wants me to go to Boston for the big picture show. It's a loan exhibition for some charity, and the Dexter Medal. His sister's going up from Washington; I could stay at the hotel with her."

"Well, why not? It'd be thrilling to be there, wandering about with everyone identifying you. How are they going? Flying?"

"I believe Ross is. I don't know how his sister is going."

"Well, go. It'll shake you up. Got clothes?"

"Oh, I've always got clothes!"

"I haven't," Margot said. "It isn't that I don't buy them," she added thoughtfully, "but I simply never seem to have them. If it's Miami, I've got splendid things for winter sports. If it's St. Moritz, I've got nothing but shade hats and linen suits. In Paris in winter I seem to have trunks full of organdies, and right this minute I have to go pour for a tea at the Italian Consulate and I'm reduced to hostess dresses and evening gowns. When we were first married I'd have one dress and wear it to everything, but now—"

Susannah was listening with an abstracted half smile.

"Margot, Ross is making violent love to me. Does that matter?"

"Doesn't he make violent love to everyone?" Margot asked practically.

"Well, exactly," Susannah said. "But I think—probably—to only one woman at a time," she added moderately.

"Oh, that of course!" Margot conceded with a little laugh. "But he is one of the fascinating persons of all time," she added. And after a moment she asked, "What do you call 'violent love,' Sanna?"

"The sort of thing he does," Sanna answered indifferently. "Flowers—compliments—the usual thing."

"Do you like him, Sanna?"

"Very much! You have to like him."

"Like someone—something—anything!" Margot advised her fervently. "Keep going, having your hair done, being seen places! Don't slump. The worst of us women is, when anything goes wrong, we slump. Don't have anyone tell Alec that Susannah never does anything but sit around and cry."

"You're good for me, Margot," Susannah said, gathering her wraps for departure. She stopped to kiss her friend goodby and went out to her car. It was half past three o'clock on a burgeoning wild day that held in its freshness of winds and height of cool blue sky an untimely hint of spring. Phillips set her down at the wide steps of the big Museum. Susannah dismissed him; she would walk home presently.

SHE went up the steps and through the turnstile at the doorway, and into the great softly warmed spaces of wide stairways and arches; sauntered up the stairs, drifted into one room in a long chain of rooms where canvases of Romney, Constable, Lawrence, Reynolds hung in dignified beauty upon expertly lighted gray walls.

He was there; he was waiting. Their hands touched and their eyes smiled at each other. They went on together, stopping before this canvas and that; Susannah amused at the detail of a Guardi, Ross studying the bold brushwork of a Sargent.

"You couldn't come on with me at five to a brawl at Valetto's?"

"Never at five. I've let Nursey go, and I'm always at home then for Evelina's bath and supper."

"Have you decided about Boston?"

"I think so. It would only mean one night, wouldn't it? The two-o'clock train on Monday, getting there at about seven for dinner, and the—say, ten-o'clock train back on Tuesday. I'd only be away from the baby one night."

"That's all. Or you could fly. I'm going up—I've got to, day after tomorrow. I'll make reservations for you at the hotel."

"Your sister's coming up from Washington?"

"Lavinia, yes. But she's going to fly, make one trip of it, and have her New York visit on the way back. Why not come, Susannah? As well do that as anything else. We'll take a good walk Tuesday morning, get on the noon train—all three of us, and lunch on the train. It'll be fun."

Susannah sighed, her face very serious as she walked on past the old canvases. Nothing was very much fun.

"Where's the picture now, Ross?"

"It went up last week. It's probably hung."

Well, it was one of the things one did.

(*Continued on page* 40)

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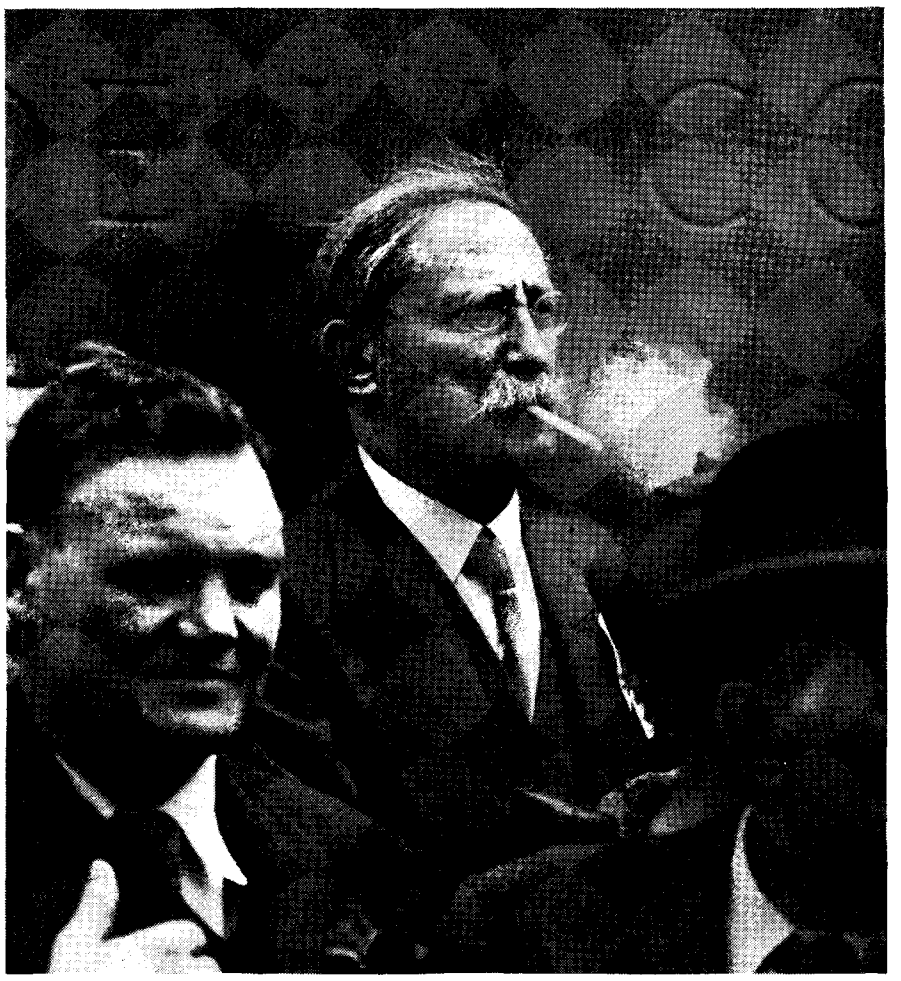
Left Face

"France is going the way of Russia," shout the alarmed conservatives. "France is headed for a Fascist dictatorship," scream the uneasy radicals. And Léon Blum, first Socialist Premier, faced with a deficit, with strikes, with dissension in his own ranks and distrust outside, is struggling for conciliation. It makes life in the republic very interesting

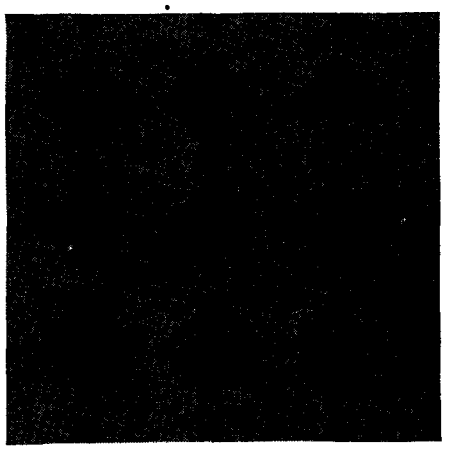
By T. R. Ybarra



PICTURES, INC.

PARIS was in the grip of the worst strike in her history. The big department stores were closed. The staffs of hotels had knocked off work. The clerks at banks were threatening to follow suit. Building operations had been discontinued. Red flags—one of them two doors away from the Paris office of J. P. Morgan & Co.—flew over groups of striking workmen, loafing defiantly among the hods which they refused to carry and the mortar which they refused to mix.

It was all very serious and very menacing and very interesting indeed to a foreigner like me—an innocent bystander, you understand—who had no personal stake at all in the whole grim business.



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WIDE WORLD

Then suddenly, without warning, the restaurants went on strike.

Cooks and waiters refused to serve another meal to anybody. And the innocent foreign bystander, who had been studying the strike from a strictly American point of view, as an unbiased outsider, with no deep-seated convictions as to French social problems, French politics, or French anything else, found himself, after a very light breakfast consumed several hours earlier, faced with the prospect of being unable to get a bite of anything whatsoever for lunch!

The Strike Situation Gets Ugly

I tried the Chatham. Closed. I scurried over to the Café de la Paix. Closed. I doubled back to Viel's. Tight shut. I shot across to Weber's. Ditto. I began to get worried. Surely, now, the Regence—? Locked!

Finally I bethought me of Harry's. How often, with my mouth watering in anticipation of a meal at some nearby Temple of French Cuisine, had I turned up my nose scornfully at those cordial signs all over his bar, offering "Ham and eggs" and "Hot dogs" and "Sandwiches, all kinds." But now it was different.

As I rushed up to his place, Harry was engaged in closing the front door. Bill Bird was just coming out. He motioned me away.

"No use!" he warned. "I just got the last sandwich."

In despair I leaned against the closing door. Whereupon Harry, gloomily pushing around a big cigar between his lips, said:

"Come right in. I'll let you have a sandwich. They've just been here to tell me to close the place and they're sure to be back in a few minutes to see if I've obeyed orders. But I don't care. Step right in. What kind do you want—ham?"

In a few minutes a ham sandwich lay before me. Also two hard-boiled eggs. I ate the sandwich and one of the eggs; but, remembering the desolate, foodless Parisian desert outside the door, I pocketed the second egg. After all, there were future meals to be thought of!

It all sounds funny now. But it didn't then.

The strike situation was getting ugly. For the first time in the history of labor troubles in France, armies of striking employees had occupied the factories and shops where they worked. They refused to evacuate them until their demands had been granted. At the Paris department stores the strikers had pasted on the show windows, in plain sight of passing crowds, the pay slips of those among them who got the worst remuneration.

"These wages are so outrageous," ran signs underneath the slips, "that we refuse to humiliate those receiving them by telling their names."

Alongside were the minimum rates of wages demanded for each category of workers—even the lowest of which were considerably higher than those on the pay slips.

"Women who work for the present rates of pay have only two courses open to them: *prostitution or a sanatorium!*" proclaimed a big sign in black lettering.

All day long multitudes of Parisians milled about excitedly in front of the show windows. They read pay slips and posters with eloquent comments and headshakings. Forming in voluble groups, they heatedly debated the pros and cons of the strike.

On one street corner you heard:

"Well, that's my personal opinion."

"This is no time for personal opinions!"

"Nonsense! Frenchmen aren't sheep!"

(Continued on page 48)

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Twenty Keys

Detective O'Malley goes after a criminal who hadn't left a card

By William MacHarg

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM TIMMINS

"Too bad your husband knocked off your Uncle Ed," O'Malley told Mrs. Wire. "He didn't do it," she said

THEY put me on that Ammon murder," O'Malley said. "I guess you read it in this morning's paper. It's a Broadway killing and I'd just as leave some other cop was working on it, but I got to do what they say as long as they keep paying me. This Ammon owned race horses and done some gambling and was well known generally. He lived for ten years in one hotel and he got shot there. Well, a dozen people might want to kill that kind of guy."

"I saw something in my newspaper," I told him, "but it wasn't much."

"We didn't give the papers everything."

We were leaving headquarters when a cop came and gave O'Malley a key.

"What's the key?" I asked him.

He showed me. It was an ordinary door key with no numbers or other mark of identification.

"When this dead guy got found," he stated, "his keys was scattered all about the room. They checked up what the keys unlocked and one key don't unlock nothing that belonged to him. Some wise desk guy here at headquarters figured out if we knew what the key was for it might show who killed him. About twenty cops are working on this case, so now they made twenty keys like that and give one to each cop."

"You don't think much of the idea," I decided.

"If I got to go trying a key in all the doors in this town, I'll put on a side line selling brushes."

WE WENT to the hotel. It was on a cross street and the lobby was full of loungers reading theater and racing papers. There were a good many women about, all of whom were young. A uniformed officer was in Ammon's rooms.

"You're to call up headquarters," the officer directed O'Malley.

"Okay," O'Malley answered, but he didn't call them.

We examined Ammon's two rooms. They were rather luxurious. There were pictures of women all about. The police had been through the place and it was in disorder.

"The boys find out anything?" O'Malley asked the cop.

"Only that his bookmaker seen him here that night and some dame come and seen him."

"How was this done, O'Malley?" I inquired.

"He got shot in his sitting-room. He'd been reading a racing paper and it looks like he put it down to talk with someone. The medical office says he got killed about midnight. In this kind of hotel more people are moving about at midnight than there are at noontime. They got no floor clerks. People go in and out and nobody pays attention to 'em. Well, somebody come in and shot and went out again and nobody seen 'em. If anybody heard the shot they don't remember because they didn't know it was a shot. This Ammon never got up till noon, when it was time to go to the race track, so it was afternoon before they found him. We don't know who knocked him off or what was the motive. It might be horses or it might be gambling or it might be women. Your choice is as good as mine is. I guess we won't never find out. A chambermaid found him. The gun was on the rug and the chambermaid stepped on it. It was his own gun."

"Any fingerprints on that gun?" the cop inquired.

"They didn't find none."

"Wait a minute!" I said. "If it was his own gun, why wasn't it suicide?"

"The doctors say he couldn't shoot himself that way."

I THOUGHT it over. "If whoever came here didn't bring any weapon," I declared, "they either didn't intend to kill Ammon when they came here, and saw the gun and did it on the spur of the moment, or else they knew Ammon so well that they knew where the gun was kept and knew that they could use it."

"You're getting smarter than you used to be."

We went down to the lobby and O'Malley called up headquarters.

"Well," he said when he came out of the booth, "this case is ended before we ever got started, so we got no more worries. They got the guy they figure done it at the precinct station. He's married to Ammon's niece."

We went to the precinct station house.

"Who is it done that murder?" O'Malley asked the desk officer.

"A guy named Wire. He and Ammon had had a lot of trouble and Wire told Ammon he'd get square with him. He went to the hotel and bumped him off."

We talked with Wire. He was a pale-faced youth dressed in the kind of clothes you see in Broadway store windows. He said he was twenty-four years old and played in a band, but the band wasn't working now.

"They caught you pretty quick, fellow," O'Malley told him.

"I didn't do it."

"Yeah, *you* tell 'em. You had been having trouble with him and you went and knocked him off."

"Sure I had trouble with him. Ed Ammon was trustee for money my wife's father left her that she was to get when she was twenty years old. It was thirty thousand dollars. On her twentieth birthday we asked Uncle Ed for the money and he wouldn't give it to us. She and I asked him for it a lot of times. I was going to give him a last chance that night. I went to the hotel and sat around the lobby thinking it over, and I decided there wasn't any use in seeing him. So I went home and told my wife we'd see a lawyer."

"Did you see a lawyer?"

"No. We were still talking about it."

"Come again, boy. You got to think up a better story than that one."

They had Ammon's bookmaker there and a blond girl named Miss DeVine. She was a showgirl.

"You see this guy Wire at the hotel?" O'Malley asked them.

They both said they'd seen him in the lobby.

"What were you calling on this dead guy about?" O'Malley asked the bookmaker.

"He was going to send me a check but he didn't do it. I went there but I didn't get the check."

"How've his ponies been doing?"

"Not so good, or he wouldn't have owed me that much money."

"How about *you*, sister?"

"He'd been telling me what of his horses to put a little money on, but I'd have been better off if he'd lost his voice before he told me anything."

I reminded O'Malley of the key and he showed it to them. They said they didn't know anything about it. We were leaving the station house when we met some cops bringing in Mrs. Wire. She was pretty and had been crying. A woman two or three years older was with her, and a thin man of about thirty. The man,

(*Continued on page* 32)

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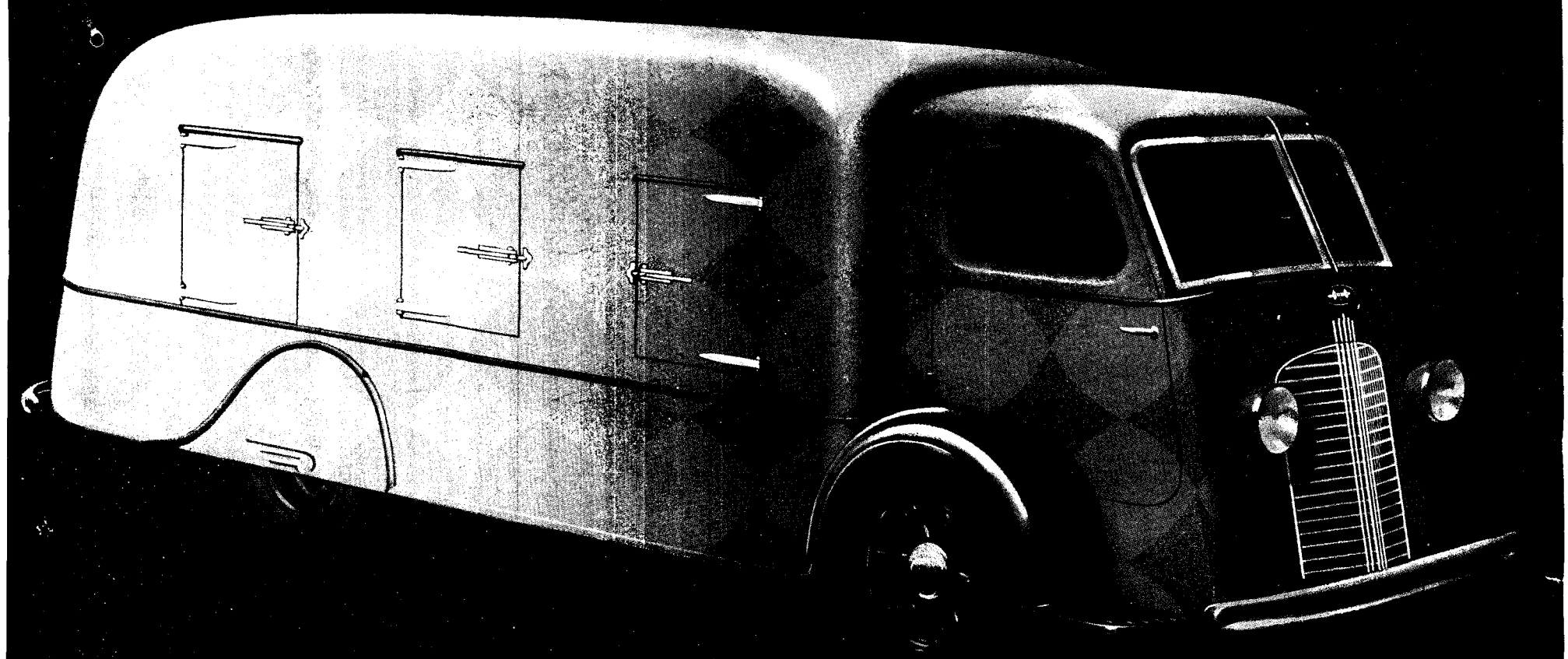
A New [illegible]

THE 1½-TON INTERNATIONAL

CAB-OVER-ENGINE TRUCK



This view of the new Model C-300 shows how readily the International cab-over-engine chassis lends itself to streamline special body design.

WITH the continued upward swing of the business cycle comes a demand for a truck specifically designed for easy handling in today's traffic. International Harvester presents a new cab-over-engine unit—Model C-300—perfectly adapted for a great many hauling needs in the 1½-ton field.

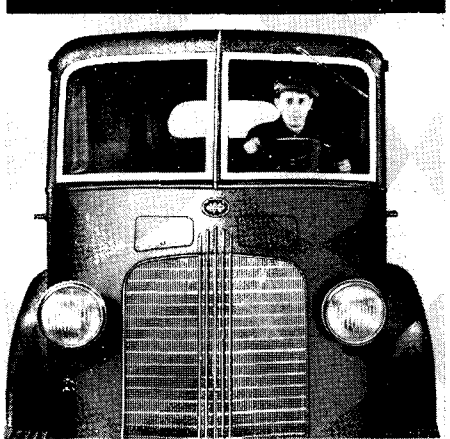
The International cab-over-engine truck has many advantages to compel the interest of buyers and operators of trucks. The length of this new unit is reduced by the length of the standard hood—and this saving is *added to the loading space.* More perfect load distribution provides greater operating economy. Increased visibility is offered the driver, and the cab is thoroughly comfortable. The engine is completely accessible and the driver has easy access to his seat. The short-turning radius spots this truck in close quarters with a minimum of jockeying—saving time, wear, and tear, for owner, machine and driver. Two wheelbase lengths: 99-in. for 11 and 12-ft., and 117-in. for 13, 14, and 15-ft. bodies back of cab.

If a truck of 1½-ton capacity, in the 12,000-pound gross-weight class, fits your needs, arrange for a demonstration of the new International Model C-300 with your nearest International branch or dealer now.

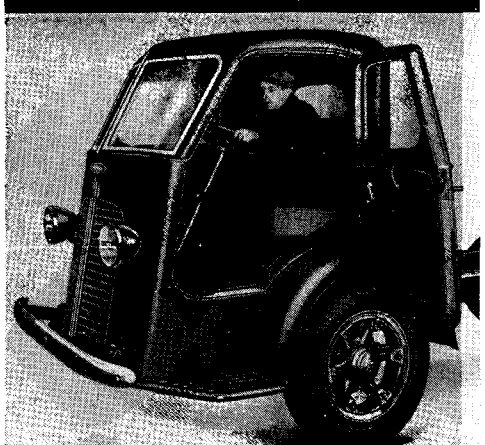
INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER COMPANY
(INCORPORATED)
606 S. Michigan Ave. Chicago, Illinois

$695

for the standard 99-in. wheelbase chassis, f. o. b. factory. Other International sizes Half-Ton to Six-Wheelers.



Head-on view of the INTERNATIONAL 1½-TON Cab-Over-Engine Truck showing attractive lines and increased visibility. Controls are placed for quick and positive handling.



The wide doors and forward steps on the new International Model C-300 make getting in and out easy and convenient. A beautiful truck to handle in cramped space.

INTE[illegible]

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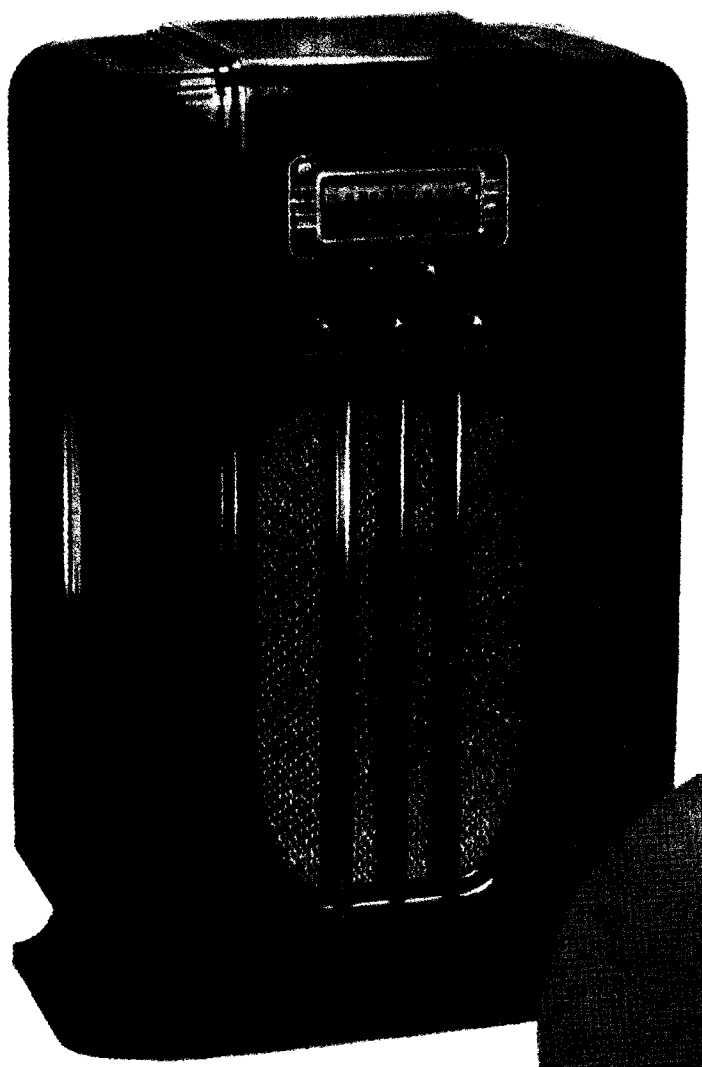
Radio's Newest Marvel

G-E Focused Tone

Revolutionizes Tuning! Auto



HERE'S something utterly new in radio—a radio that you simply can't tune wrong. If you set the dial of the new G-E the slightest bit off-tune—*and nine out of ten people do without knowing it*—an amazing thing happens. Instantly the new G-E Radio automatically shifts itself into absolute hair-line tuning.

And as it corrects your tuning error, the new G-E Colorama Dial changes from red to green. When the dial flashes green you can be sure your program is in perfect Focused Tone—every note and accent flawless, life-like and true!

CUSTOM-TAILORED DIALS

The new G-E is a Personalized Radio—with a custom-tailored dial. Your own local station letters flash on when you tune in. This new G-E Dial puts an end to hunting up kilocycle numbers, too—stations are plainly marked by *letters and kilocycles.*

The new General Electric comes in 26 handsome models—priced from $29.95 *to* $750 *(Eastern list) —slightly higher West and South*

You'll be fascinated as you watch the new G-E shift itself into precision tuning. You'll get an even greater thrill when you close your eyes and listen to the whole new range of overtones and undertones which only the new G-E brings you.

SEE—AND HEAR—THE NEW G-E

Until you've heard the new G-E, you'll never know how far radio has leaped ahead in one short year. Stop in soon—there's a G-E Franchised Radio Dealer near you—and discover what your ears are missing. Compare the tone and performance of the new G-E with that of any radio at any price. When you've seen them all—and heard them all—you'll buy the new G-E.

WHAT IS FOCUSED TONE?

—It is G-E's new radio circuit that *automatically* and *visibly* shifts itself into hair-line tuning—perfect tone.

—It is the new G-E Colorama Dial that instantly changes from red to green to tell you that your program is perfectly tuned.

—It is the Personalized Radio with the custom-tailored Dial—your own local station letters flash on when you tune in.

—It is Silent Tuning—you can switch from one program to another without a single squeal, squawk, or screech.

—It is the combination of all the revolutionary G-E Radio inventions and developments—G-E Metal Tubes; the G-E Sentry Box; G-E Stabilized Dynamic Speakers; G-E Sliding Rule Tuning Scale; G-E "V-doublet" All-wave Antenna—which give you the finest, truest tone of any radio ever built—that's Focused Tone! Only the new G-E gives it to you AUTOMATICALLY!—VISIBLY!—INSTANTLY!

R E S E A R C H K E E P S G E N E R A L

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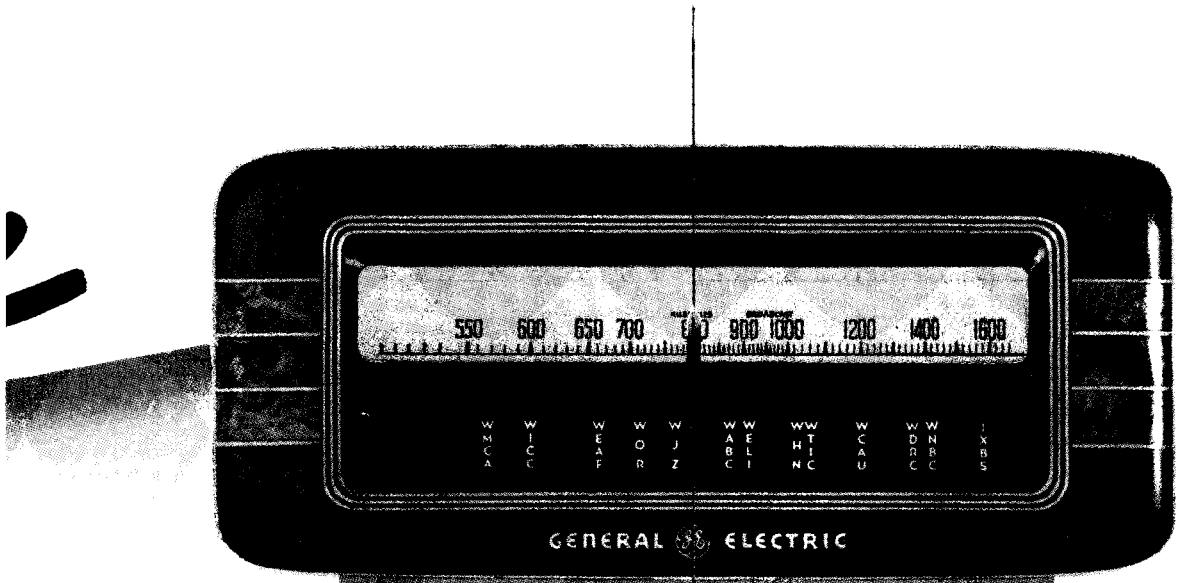


natically Assures *Perfect Tone!*

—harsh, blurred, discordant tone. Nine out of ten people unknowingly tune in their radios off-focus.

The new G-E Radio *automatically* shifts itself into hair-line tuning every time. And at the same instant the Colorama Dial changes from red to green to tell you your program is in Perfect Focused Tone.

—harsh, blurred, discordant tone. Nine out of ten people unknowingly tune in their radios off-focus.

The new G-E brings you every radio service on the air

FOREIGN BROADCASTS—over ALL short-wave bands. Entrancing music—exciting news from the capitals of the world. A whole new world of radio enjoyment brought to you with life-like tone and precision.

DOMESTIC SHORT-WAVE STATIONS—particularly valuable for long distance day-time reception.

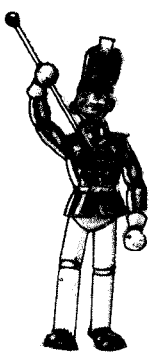
DOMESTIC PROGRAMS—heard with a perfection of tone never possible before.

POLICE CALLS—news, thrills, excitement!

ULTRA SHORT-WAVE—all frequencies, including the new ultra short-wave 30,000 to 40,000 kilocycle service now being rapidly extended across the country.

AMATEUR STATIONS—interesting amateur broadcasts—day and night.

AVIATION—exciting conversations between ships and air-ports—night and day.



GENERAL ELECTRIC *Radio*

You'll always be glad you bought a G-E

E L E C T R I C Y E A R S A H E A D !

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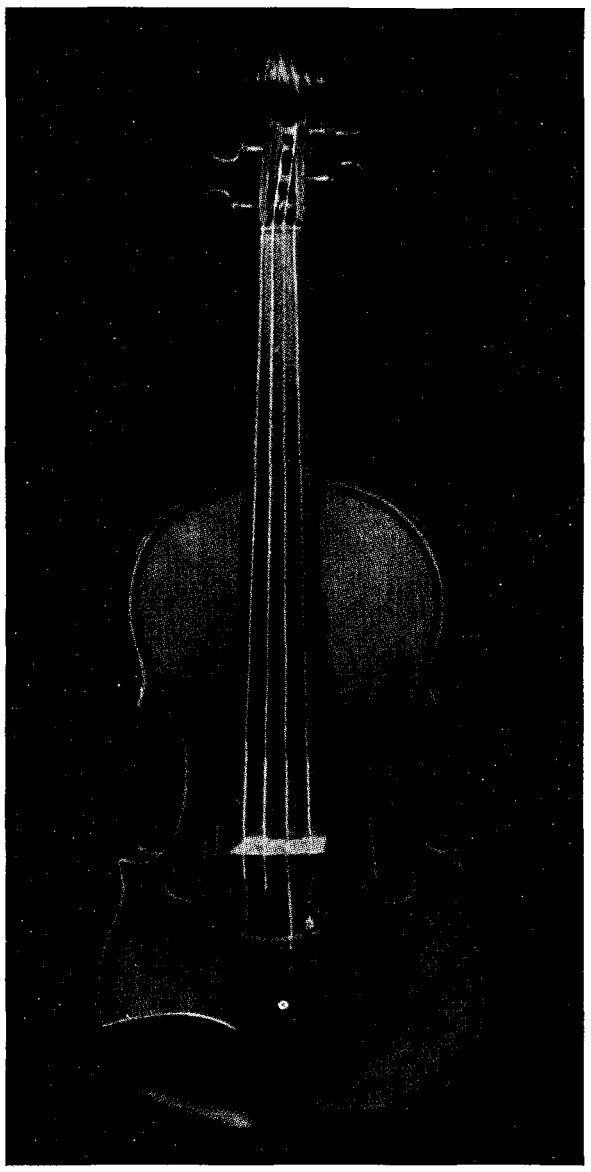

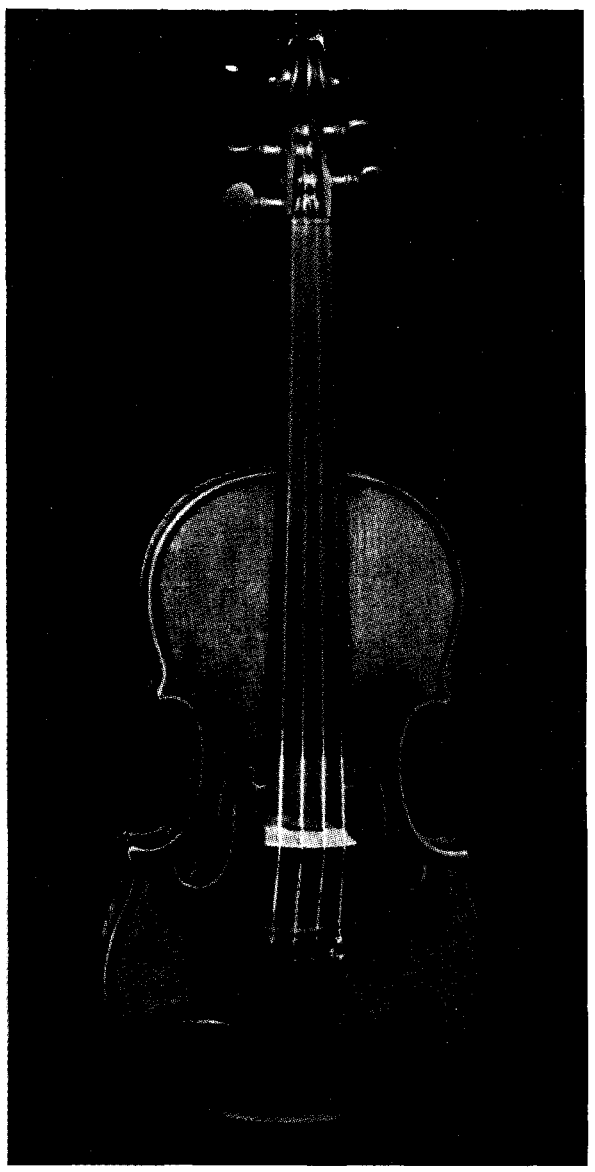

A copy of a Stradivarius violin—only an expert can distinguish it from the original. Its tone may even be better

The genuine Stradivarius, one of the two hundred-odd recognized as such. The values range from $9,000 to $30,000

Fiddler's Friend

By Kyle Crichton

OLD Man Schilbach sits at his workbench in his establishment next door to Carnegie Hall in New York and listens to the nonsense of artists who bring in their violins to be fixed.

"I wish you'd look at this fiddle, Mr. Schilbach," they say worriedly, "it's moody."

"Maybe it's you that's moody," says Mr. Schilbach tactfully.

He takes up the violin and begins examining it.

"Perhaps it's the sound post?" suggests the artist.

Mr. Schilbach squints at the sound post, makes various mysterious motions in the interior of the fiddle, gives it a loving look and hands it back to the player. The violinist takes it, draws the bow across the strings and assumes an expression as seraphic as an angel.

"Ah-h," he cries, "isn't that beautiful!"

He goes out in ecstasy.

"What'd you do to the violin, Mr. Schilbach?" ask the other customers.

"Nothing," says Mr. Schilbach, going back to scraping the finger board of a Stradivarius cello.

Mr. Schilbach—Oswald A. Schilbach—has been making and repairing violins for fifty-four years. He started in his native Saxony and has been at it for forty-eight years in this country.

"Adventure," says Mr. Schilbach, when you ask him how he came to America. "I just wanted to see the place. Thought I'd stay a few years and go back. I'm still here. It's been about the same; over there I'd make violins; over here I repair them and sell them."

He's now seventy-three—a little, wiry, white-haired gentleman who can spot a good instrument as far as he can see it, literally, and can't begin to tell you what distinguishes a good one from a bad one.

"You just get so you can tell them from looking at them," he explains. "Sometimes you run into a cheap one with a good tone; sometimes you find a genuine Stradivarius which has a bad tone. You can't take any lessons in it; you learn it from seeing thousands of fiddles."

When he landed here forty-eight years ago, he worked first for Herman Koenig, who had a store on the Bowery, which was then the musical and theatrical center of New York. Koenig made and repaired violins. Later he went with Victor Flechter, who was a dealer in stringed instruments. He stayed with Flechter for nine years and got his first lessons in judging fine violins.

"The best way to judge violins is to be a maker of them," he says. "Otherwise it takes years of study. Look over there on that table . . . Seven fiddles there. Can you tell which one's the Strad? Pick up that one on the left. . . . Go on. You won't hurt it. . . . Now look inside there. You see the label. Well, it says Antonius Stradivarius, but you can't tell by that. It might be a late label, but it happens to be a genuine Strad. . . . It belongs to one of our best artists, Sascha Jacobsen, and it's worth about $25,000. . . . Yes, sir. . . . How do I know it's genuine? Well, I just know, but I probably couldn't prove it. How does Duveen know when a painting is genuine? If he sells it for $25,000 and the buyer gets worried about it, all they can do is have a lawsuit and have experts testify. Then a jury decides if it's the real thing or not."

As a matter of fact, many of the greatest violinists don't use Stradivarius violins; many of them use the Guarnerius. Albert Spalding and Jascha Heifetz each has a Guarnerius. Efrem Zimbalist, Mischa Elman and Fritz Kreisler have Strads. In 1924, a Guarnerius was worth between $7,500 and $25,000; a Stradivarius between $9,000 and $30,000. Like other commodities, good violins vary in price according to the state of the world generally. The latest quotation on a Guarnerius was $25,000, for the violin held by Benno Rabinoff, the concert artist.

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is the Betts Strad, which is held by a Boston collector at the price of $125,000. Betts himself was a famous English lover of violins who lived around 1820. He found the Strad in a pawnshop and paid twenty shillings ($5) for it. It later sold for $60,000. The Betts story has stimulated Stradivarius searchers through the years. Experts estimate that there are no more than two hundred to two hundred and fifty genuine Strads in the world and these have been known for a long time, but there is still hope that another ancient one will turn up. There has even grown up a racket about the business. It has to do with farmhouses or hock shops and attics and barns.

The searcher comes upon a farmer who is selling his farm and allows as how there's an old fiddle up in the barn.

"Well, just let me look at it," says the smart fellow, trying to be nonchalant and citylike.

The farmer drags out an old moth-eaten instrument and disappears while the city slicker examines the violin. Inside he finds the Stradivarius label.

"This is a pretty good violin," he says to the farmer, who has returned opportunely. "Not terribly good but better than the usual run. I'll give you $250 for it."

"Two hundred and fifty for that old fiddle!" says the farmer in astonishment. "Well, it belonged to grandpap and is a family heirloom, but at that price . . ."

The deal is made, the violin is brought back to New York and the experts tell the triumphant discoverer that he has a very nice model which would bring about $50 on the open market.

"Look at the label!" cries the discoverer. "Doesn't it say Stradivarius?"

"Sure," say the experts, "but not a genuine Strad. There are thousands of Strads, copies of old Antonius' original Strads, and they're worth just what any ordinary fiddle is worth."

The Maker of Strads

Stradivarius died at the age of ninety-three. He was born in Cremona in 1644 and was first a violin player. He came of a wealthy family, had considerable means of his own, and eventually decided to improve upon the violins of his master, Amati. He spent the years between 1668 and 1686 in selecting the best wood. From 1686 to 1694, he experimented with a violin which had a flatter arch and was much larger than former models. Between 1695 and 1714, he perfected the model which has never been equaled. Stradivarius was a rapid workman and is said to have finished a violin a week. That would mean approximately three thousand Strads over his active career of nearly sixty years, but there are fewer than two hundred and fifty known Strads in existence today.

Mr. Schilbach likes to tell of the player who came into his shop, picked up a Strad and began playing it. Finally he put it down in disgust.

"Damned German factory fiddles," he said. "They're all alike."

After some difficulty, Mr. Schilbach convinced him not only that it was a Strad, but one belonging to a famous concert artist. The player took it up again and began to play. This time he did it with reverence.

"Well," he said, reluctantly, "there's a certain something in a Strad which comes out even in this one."

There are two Schilbachs—father and son, both called Oswald. They have reverence for a good violin, Strad or otherwise, but they think there is a lot of bunk and hocus-pocus about much of the idolatry.

"You hear people say that if a violin isn't used it deteriorates," they say. "It isn't true at all. Of course if you put a good fiddle up in the attic and let it get mildewed or eaten by worms, it won't do it any good. If it's in a collection and well taken care of, it'll be as good as new. According to the artist, there is never a bad performance by a violinist; it's always the violin which is not acting properly."

Among the rarest of Strads are the violas, of which he made only a few. They sell now for around $75,000. Also very rare are the cellos, which are quoted at $50,000 and $85,000. Rarest of all is a Stradivarius guitar, said to be the only one he ever made. As a collector's item, it is priceless.

What always strikes a layman is the casual way in which the rare instruments are treated. Meningand, maker and repairer who lived around 1800, even undertook to reduce the size of the Strads. He did it without loss of quality. Even the greatest of violins and cellos need repairs. When the glue comes loose, men like Schilbach simply take the Stradivarius or Guarnerius or

"There's your trouble—bullfrogs"

Amati apart and put it together again with fresh glue.

"Hurt it?" ask the Schilbachs with amazement. "Certainly not! Take that Strad cello there, now, which belongs to Gerald Warburg. If you put your fist through the top, we'd just pick up every piece we could find, no matter how little it was, and put it together again. The tone would not necessarily be impaired if the instrument was otherwise strong enough in its construction."

Most violins come now from Germany, Czechoslovakia and France. Only a few are made in Italy and England. The French center is at Mirecourt and the German instruments come from Saxony and the Czechoslovakian town of Schoenbach, right across the border. The Saxony violins are made with spruce tops and maple backs and sides. There are a variety of Guarnerius violins (there was a large family and they all made fiddles) but the most famous are those of Joseph del Jesu, who was a contemporary of Stradivarius.

For many years the standard great violins of the world were those of Joseph Stainer, the German master, who lived between 1621 and 1683. Good violins were late in reaching America. The first good buy was made by John P. Waters, who brought over the King Joseph Guarnerius and later sold it to R. D. Hawley of Hartford, Conn., who had the first American collection. It is now the Horace Havemeyer collection. The great Italian schools have been at Cremona, Brescia and Venice. A Cremona violin may come from any of a hundred different makers. Count Cozio di Salabere began the first Italian collection, taking over the famous "Messiah" Strad and a dozen others from Stradivarius' son. He kept the collection until financial reverses after the Napoleonic wars made him relinquish it. That is when the Strads and Guarneriuses ousted the Stainers from priority in the European markets.

What the average player should pay for a violin is a matter of dispute.

"Some of the best orchestral players in New York have violins which cost them no more than $200," says Mr. Schilbach. "That may be either because they have luck in picking a cheap one with good tone or because they can't afford any more. A first-class violin, but not of the great makes, can be had for around $3,000.

Radio work requires a special type of instrument. In the old days of phonograph records, the best violin was not always the best recording fiddle, and the matter of radio tone is just as mysterious. There are some which hit the microphone exactly where it lives and others, of equal qualities, which reproduce badly.

How Much is It Worth?

In 1924, as listed in Alberto Bachmann's "Encyclopedia of the Violin," prices ranged as follows:

Nichola Amati—$2,000 to $8,000
Carlo Bergonzi—$4,000 to $12,000
Guadagnini—$2,000 to $8,000
Guarnerius—$7,500 to $25,000 and up
Montagnani—$3,000 to $8,000
Stradivarius—$9,000 to $30,000 and up.

In late years prices have generally declined but in the matter of the great violins there is no price ceiling. Strad violins have sold for as high as $65,000. In the past year there have been sales in New York around $15,000 and $20,000. There has been no chart of prices in late years but it may be said that the average price is lower and the exceptional price even higher. With only a few genuine instruments left, owners change rarely and prices fluctuate according to need and desire.

The secret of the Stradivarius has eluded modern violin makers. They have analyzed the wood and the varnish and have duplicated them exactly. They have duplicated the measurements to the thousandths of an inch, and yet the finished product has been nothing like a Strad.

"What makes a great violin," says Mr. Schilbach, "is all the proper ingredients—wood, varnish, measurements—and luck and age. Think of them analyzing the varnish! How could they tell anything by that? How do they know that many of the original gums in the varnish hadn't evaporated entirely in the course of the hundreds of years? Stradivarius used a ground varnish of golden yellow covered with a light red, which later turned to brown. You could duplicate that exactly and still you wouldn't have a Strad. Violin makers have made instruments from woods which were two hundred years old but when they finished, they just had a new fiddle. So you must have the perfect combination, plus age, and the whole instrument must age together. Every Stradivarius isn't a good one and probably never was. It's like the acoustics of a theater—sometimes they're good and sometimes they're bad and nobody knows exactly what makes them good or bad."

Violin bows are an art in themselves. Mr. Schilbach repairs bows but doesn't make them. Old bows run in price as high as $2,500, but whereas violins improve with age, bows deteriorate. They can be restrung but eventually the wood gives way. As a consequence, the rarest old bows are museum pieces.

The Battle over Steel Strings

So Old Man Schilbach sits at his workbench, rehairing bows for fiddlers, repairing violins, giving opinions on violins, selling violins and violin strings. Right now he is engaged in finishing the conquest of steel strings over gut.

"Nice people, these artists," says Mr. Schilbach, "but pretty funny. When the first steel E string was introduced twenty-five years ago, you'd have thought the world was coming to an end. They said it was the gut string which gave the soul to the fiddle. Well, pretty soon they got reconciled to the E and then came the aluminum D and the aluminum A string. All that's left now is the G string, which is gut. If that goes, they say, all is lost. They'll come to it but they'll fight."

He picked out a set of the steel strings and came over to display them.

"You know," he said, "an artist was in here the other day—a great artist. He wouldn't listen to changing to steel, said it gave a metallic sound. I said he wouldn't be able to tell the difference. So I took the fiddle in here and had some other people watching and he stayed out in the other room. I played first the gut and then the steel and then vice versa several times. He was wrong the first three times he tried to guess which I was playing."

He went back to working on the finger board of a Strad cello. He scraped it with as much vigor as if it was an ordinary box picked up in a junk shop. He turned it over and looked at it tenderly.

"Beautiful, eh?" he said, turning it about admiringly. "You can't go wrong on the real ones."

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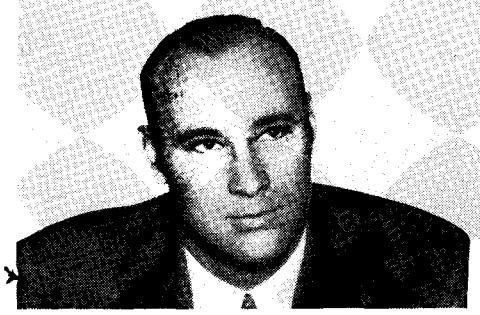

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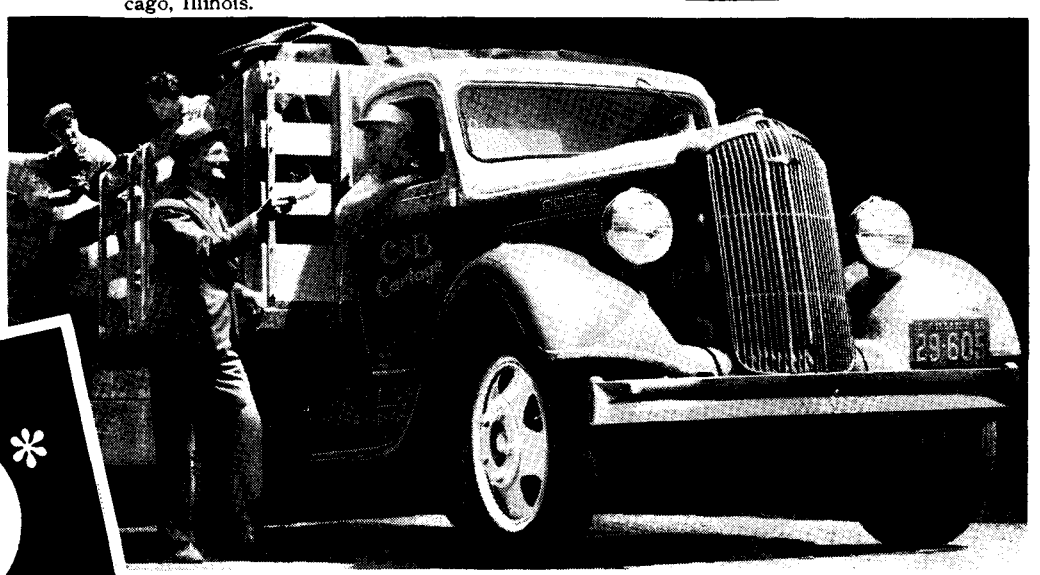

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Twenty Keys

Continued from page 24

it proved, was the trainer of Ammon's horses and the woman was his wife. Their name was Farnie.

"What are you two people doing around here?" O'Malley asked.

"I sent for her," said Mrs. Wire.

"You know anything about this murder?"

"Not a thing, Officer," Farnie answered. "I and my wife was out home on Long Island and we read about it in the paper. Then Florrie called Winnie up and she asked us to come in here." Winnie was plainly Mrs. Wire and Florrie was Mrs. Farnie.

"Too bad your husband knocked off your Uncle Ed," O'Malley told Mrs. Wire.

"He didn't do it. I know Tommy wouldn't do anything like that."

"You be a cop a while, Mrs. Wire, and you'll find out that when things are right for it anybody'll do anything."

We left the station house.

"You didn't ask Wire about the key, O'Malley," I remarked.

"Why would I?"

"Yes," I reflected, "if Wire did it, the key probably didn't have anything to do with it. I can't see through that business about the key anyway. It's queer Ammon's keys were scattered all over the room, but I can't imagine any reason why the killer should leave a key of his own among them, and if it wasn't his key I don't see how it can help to solve the murder. Maybe the killer was searching Ammon's pockets for something else and the keys got scattered by accident."

"You're quite a thinker."

I didn't see O'Malley for a few days.

"Anything new about that Ammon case?" I asked when I met him.

"Why, only a little. Ammon's horses hadn't been doing very well and he'd lost money gambling, and he'd used Mrs. Wire's money that he was trustee for. He couldn't pay it when she asked him for it, so Wire had a motive."

"It was Wire all right, then," I declared.

"I guess so. I kind of hope he didn't do it, though. That Mrs. Wire is a nice kid."

NOTHING happened for about a week. I was near headquarters and I dropped in to see O'Malley. Mrs. Wire and Mrs. Farnie were there and the police had been questioning them again.

"I was thinking I might call you up," O'Malley told me. "I'm going uptown. These ladies are going that way, so we'll give 'em a lift."

We took a cab.

"They found out what door that key unlocks," O'Malley informed me.

"How did they find it?"

"I guess you'd call it accident. All them different cops each had a key and wherever they went they tried it in whatever doors they seen and one cop found a door it fitted."

We stopped in Greenwich Village. There was a uniformed cop in front of a building and some reporters were talking with him. We went in there. We were going to leave Mrs. Wire and Mrs. Farnie in the cab but they wanted to go with us. On the third floor some plain-clothes men were talking with the janitor in a small apartment and there were more reporters. O'Malley tried his key in the entrance door of the apartment and it worked all right.

"Who had this place?" the plain-clothes men asked the janitor.

"I'm new here," the janitor replied. "They moved out before I came in."

The plain-clothes men went around and showed pictures of Wire and Ammon to the tenants in the building but nobody recognized them. Mrs. Wire and Mrs. Farnie had gone down to wait in the cab.

"We'll send them ladies home," O'Malley directed me.

I went down and sent them home in the cab and O'Malley came out.

"What now?" I asked.

"Nothing."

"I see," I comprehended. "You mean nothing more can be done until you find out who occupied that apartment. With all the doors there are in this town, you were certainly lucky to find the right one."

He was going back to headquarters.

IN NEXT morning's papers I read all about finding the apartment. As the newspapers hadn't known anything about the key before, they made a lot of it. In the afternoon O'Malley dropped in to see me.

"Anything up, O'Malley?" I asked him.

"All quiet. I might get a phone call here."

The phone rang and he answered it.

"I'm moving fast," he then told me.

We ran down and got a cab and broke speed laws driving to the Bronx, where we went into a big apartment building. A plain-clothes cop was talking with the building superintendent.

"The couple are both in traveling businesses," the superintendent was telling the cop, "so they are here only occasionally. She's in there now. She'd lost her key and so I had to let her in. I'll take you up there if you want."

"No need," O'Malley answered. "I guess I got a key."

We all went up to a second-floor apartment where a card beside the bell said "Ramsey." O'Malley's key unlocked the door. Mrs. Farnie was inside, packing some things into a handbag. She screamed at sight of us.

"Go on and pack, lady," O'Malley told her. But she wouldn't do it. So we put her, weeping, into the cab and took her to headquarters and waited till some cops brought Farnie in.

"Hello, trainer," O'Malley said to him. "So you knocked off your boss."

Farnie stared at his wife and then around at all of us.

"I had my reason," he said miserably.

They took Farnie and his wife into the inspector's office and O'Malley went with them and I waited until he came out.

"So it was Farnie killed him," I said.

"Right."

"And Wire had nothing to do with it?"

"Not a thing. This Ammon was always running after women and one of them that he caught up with was his trainer's wife. They couldn't see one another without Farnie suspecting something, so Ammon rented that place in the Bronx under a phony name and they met there. Farnie got suspicious of his wife and watched her and found out about it. Farnie says he couldn't stop loving his wife no matter what she done, but he couldn't forgive his boss."

"He says if he don't get the raise yuh promised 'im, he ain't gonna come up!"

JAY IRVING

"DID you suspect Farnie?" I inquired.

"Why, no—I didn't."

"Well, I simply don't understand how you traced it to him," I declared.

"Yeah? Why not? Our trouble in this case was that a lot of different people might have had reason to do it. There wasn't no evidence left in the room and we couldn't find no one who seen anybody go there. It looked like the probable killer was Tommy Wire but we couldn't get enough to prove it on him, so it might be that it was someone else. We checked up what women Ammon had went with, and whoever he had had trouble with at the track, and what gamblers he owed money, and whoever we couldn't find out where they was at the time Ammon got knocked off we put a tail on 'em and had 'em watched. We had cops watching that bookmaker and that Miss DeVine, and it come to me that Farnie and his wife didn't have no alibi except what they give each other, so we had them watched too.

"Our idea was that somebody might do something that would point out that they might be the murderer. Well, nobody done nothing. We couldn't break the case without they did, so we was stuck. Till then I hadn't thought much about the key. It was a door key but it didn't unlock any door belonging to anybody that we had reason to suspect."

"The key unlocked two apartments," I remarked.

"THAT'S it. I figured that we might use the key to make whoever done the murder think us cops was on the wrong track; and that would make 'em feel safe, and then maybe they would do something. I found a vacant apartment and I had the lock fixed so that the key would unlock it. There wasn't nobody but the inspector and I and the young cop that pretended to find the place that knew I done that; all them other cops thought it was on the level and the newspapers thought that too. If Wire done the killing the key probably didn't have nothing to do with the case, but it happened Mrs. Wire was at headquarters when I was going out there, so I thought I'd take her along. It was just luck that Mrs. Farnie was with her, but that didn't make any real difference because Mrs. Farnie would have read about it in the papers anyway.

"When Farnie found out about his wife and Ammon, she confessed all about it to him, and give him the key to the apartment her and Ammon had together. Farnie figured, after he'd knocked Ammon off, to get Ammon's key so that it wouldn't give no explanation of the murder, but Ammon had several keys that looked alike and Farnie got the wrong one. So then they didn't dare do anything, and Farnie threw the keys away. Mrs. Farnie told him, after, that she'd left some things in the apartment that might be traced to her, but she didn't dare go there for fear she might be watched.

"Well, then we faked finding that apartment. With all the doors there are in this town it wasn't impossible one key might unlock two of 'em, and Farnie and his wife thought that was what had happened. They figured us cops was so busy in the wrong place that Mrs. Farnie could take a chance and get her things. When she left Long Island, the cop that was tailing her called up headquarters and he called again when he found out where she went, and I and you went out there. I thought probably she would have left before we got there but she spent so much time washing furniture and doorknobs to be sure her and Ammon hadn't left no fingerprints, that she was still there when we got to the place. Mrs. Farnie wasn't the kind of woman to knock anybody off, so it was plain her husband done it; and when we pinched him he seen we had the goods on him and he admitted it."

"You're a smart cop," I told him.

"Well, I don't have to be. If the key hadn't broke the case we'd have found some other way to do it. A crook has to be smart because he has to do it right the first time, but us cops can be dumb because, if we ain't right the first time, we can keep on trying different ways until we get the right one."

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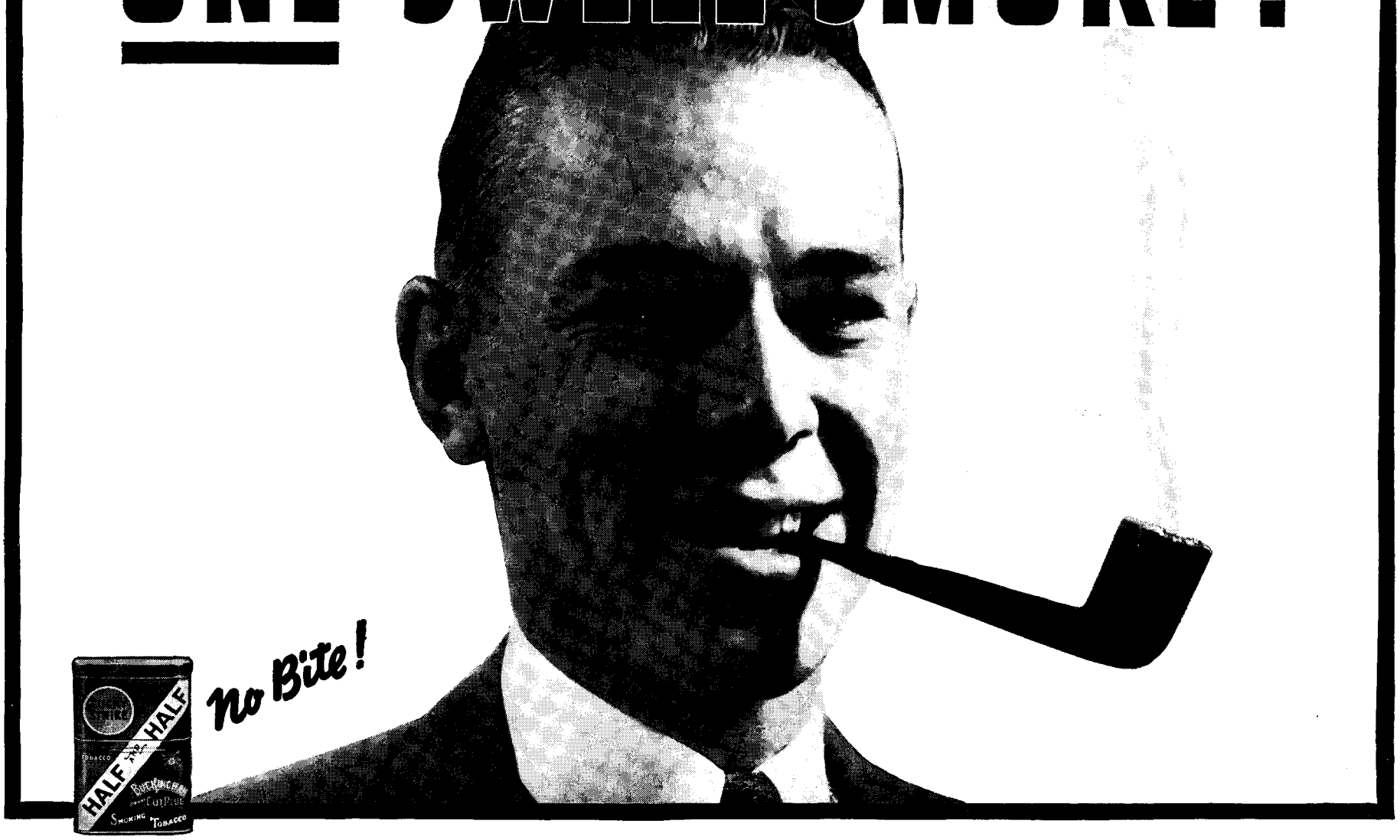

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HALF AND HALF

The Safe Pipe-Tobacco

FOR PIPE OR CIGARETTE

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The Dumb Gods Speak

Continued from page 9

"You will know what is going to happen to you directly," she announced.

Mr. Jonson nodded gravely.

"Would you have any objection to telling me something about your principal?" he inquired.

"Do you mean that you do not know?"

Mr. Jonson coughed slightly.

"I have heard various stories," he confided. "I have been told, for instance, that the man who runs this establishment is a young American scientist—Mr. Mark Humberstone, son of the great inventor."

"Well?"

"Then, on the other hand," Mr. Jonson continued, "I have been told that there is someone of greater importance who keeps always in the background."

"And this mysterious person's name?"

"You yourself alluded to him just now as Mr. Cheng."

THERE was a brief silence. The girl tapped with her fingers upon the desk.

"At least," she said, "you need not concern yourself for the present with idle rumors. There is such a person as Mr. Cheng, of course, but you are not likely to see much of him. Mr. Mark Humberstone is our acting principal."

The door was opened and closed. A young man smiled pleasantly at the girl as he advanced into the room. He was tall, broad-shouldered and he carried himself with the easy swing of an athlete. His hair was slightly disarranged.

"Good morning, mademoiselle," he greeted her. "Forgive my ruffled-up appearance. I have been having half an hour in the gymnasium."

She nodded and pointed to where Mr. Jonson had risen to his feet. The young man swung round.

"So this is Mr. Jonson, is it?"

The latter beamed acquiescence. He was standing in front of his chair with a bag on either side of him. Mark Humberstone looked him up and down curiously. There was something in his puzzled scrutiny which almost suggested recognition.

"So you want a job here, Mr. Jonson?"

"That is why I came."

"Let's see what you have in those bags."

Mr. Jonson obediently opened the suitcases. The young man examined their contents in blank surprise and, stooping down, drew out a pair of scarlet silk tights which he held up wonderingly.

"What on earth is this?" he demanded.

"Both these bags," Mr. Jonson explained, "contain my professional outfit. I have an engagement this week at the Jetée Casino. I imagine there are others in your bureau, sir, who follow some sort of profession as a cloak to their more serious activities. It has always been my custom."

HE LAID out the contents upon the floor. Whilst he was still stooping Mark Humberstone, with a swift movement, withdrew a very finished article in the way of modern guns from his hip pocket. Mr. Jonson stood suddenly upright.

"I do not suppose," he remarked with a smile, "that that is any surprise to you. It is a very good gun."

"I know the make," Mark acknowledged, opening the breech and satisfying himself that it was unloaded. "It shall be returned to you before you go."

"So long as I am not expected to work without it," Mr. Jonson murmured.

Catherine Oronoff looked across at the visitor curiously.

"Are you Professor Ventura?"

"That is my stage name," he replied. "I am better known as The Man Who Stops the World."

"One of your tricks?"

He bowed.

Humberstone sank into an easy chair a few yards away. His long nervous fingers were still playing with the revolver which he held in his hand. He looked up suddenly with a frown.

"What post did you hope to fill here?"

"My business for the last two years," the applicant confided, "has been in company with two others to guard the life of a person of some consequence."

"Your patron still lives?"

"He is, I believe, in the best of health."

"And why have you abandoned your position?"

"I became out of sympathy with the person whom I was guarding. I realized that I was drifting into a very dangerous position."

"So you found your way here," Mark Humberstone meditated. "And now?"

"I should like a post upon the personal staff of your executive, sir," he confided. "I should like to act as a free lance, remaining always in the background but always present—the number one bodyguard of you and Mr. Cheng."

"Gold!" RODNEY DESARRO

Mark Humberstone contemplated his visitor with thoughtful eyes.

"You are a curious sort of fellow."

"So your father said more than once when I guarded for three years his private laboratory at Beaumont Park," Mr. Jonson observed imperturbably.

Mark Humberstone sat up with a start. His face cleared.

"Now I remember you!" he exclaimed.

Mr. Jonson appeared gratified.

"For three years," he went on, "my orders were to watch over the person of your father and if there was trouble to waste no time asking questions—to shoot. That, you may remember, sir, I did three times. The professor was always protected. No one was ever able to lay even a finger upon him."

"You called yourself a Russian in those days and you came from the staff of some notorious bootlegger."

"What of it?" Mr. Jonson said.

There was a short silence, then Mark rose to his feet and tossed the revolver lightly back into Mr. Johnson's outstretched hands.

"You are attached to my bureau," he announced. "I am not sure," he went on, "that either Mr. Cheng or myself is in any particular danger but there are certainly people in the world with whom we are not popular. This young lady," he added, turning to Catherine, "will take you to the staff secretary. He will allot you a room and provide you with what money you require. Until you have definite instructions keep out of sight as much as possible. Afterwards, mademoiselle, you will be so kind as to send for Suzanne."

Mr. Jonson picked up his bags, bowed low to his new patron and followed Catherine Oronoff from the room.

SUZANNE of the International Bureau, concerning whose real vocation in life there were various rumors afloat, held in these days a premier position amongst the courtesans of Nice. She was tall, willowy and exotic in her characteristics. The sheen of her yellow hair, untouched by any form of artificial coloring, was her chief beauty. She had, however, the eyes of an eastern slave—languishing and passionate—the sneering but at times very attractive mouth of a Parisian cocotte of the *haut monde*. In Nice she had achieved great success and in the only night restaurant which she frequented she reigned as a queen. She curtsied to Mark Humberstone as she entered his audience chamber a few days later and assumed an air of devout attention.

"You have sent for your slave," she said, stifling a yawn. "I was expecting your summons but it is early for me—and a little inconvenient."

"Yes, I sent for you," Mark, who had seated himself at Catherine Oronoff's desk, observed.

"*Eh bien?*"

"You are living happily these days, they tell me, Suzanne."

"*Comme çi, comme ça,*" she answered with a little shrug of the shoulders.

"You will perhaps learn presently," he said, "how to die happily."

SHE mocked at him, yet somehow or other there was a chill feeling in her blood. Not many people had seen that look in Mark Humberstone's eyes without fear.

"*Oh la la!*" she exclaimed. "Have I not worked well?"

"Your work is an utter failure," was the calm reply. "Costoli has broken his leave to play around with you. Henceforth the man is useless to our clients and I know of no other who could have served their purpose."

"Useless?" she cried passionately. "What do you mean? You have had the secret sailing orders of September the seventeenth; you have had the new charts of which only a dozen have been issued. Costoli is a ruined man and he knows it. He lies in my flat—he is there now—like a whipped dog. What more can I do?"

"Costoli dismissed from the service, Costoli no longer inspector of naval gunnery and a member of the Admiralty Board of his country, is useless to those for whom we are working," Mark said coldly. "I told you what was required. The man was to have been your slave until the moment came when the great things were near. Now, in less than a week, you have made him compromise himself with his government; you have made him desert his post; his honor is gone; his life forfeit. What use is such a pricked bubble to us?"

"Well, he is no more use to me," the girl declared with a heartless little shrug of the shoulders. "You had better get rid of him. I should not advise you to hand him over to the authorities. He might in a fit of remorse tell them about me and anything that he suspects about the bureau."

"So your little tongue has been wagging, eh?" Mark asked quietly.

"It is false!" she shrieked. "You should not accuse me like this—I who have worked for you as a slave. Antonio is not a fool. What does he suppose I want the papers for? He knows that I am a spy. He has given me what you asked for and I have given him the payment he craved. How am I to blame if he loses his head?"

THE man whom she was addressing yawned—very lightly and very delicately. It was just an indication of weariness but it brought a shiver to the heart of the girl who watched him.

"You have captured the pawn, Suzanne," he admitted, "but you have not only failed in the great things, you have made it impossible that you can ever succeed. Costoli in a month's time could have given us information that would have been worth ten millions. So long as he was going to sell his honor, he might have done it for something worth while. He behaved like a fool. So also did you. A woman of the world knows how to keep a man at her feet better than that."

She threw herself onto a divan and swung her leg. It was obvious, from her scanty attire, that her abode was somewhere under the same roof.

"So I am dragged down here to be found fault with," she complained, "to be told, I suppose, that the hundred thousand francs I wanted for next week will not be forthcoming."

"In that you are correct," Mark agreed. "The hundred thousand francs will not be forthcoming. On the other hand," he went on, unlocking a drawer and producing a square sheet of paper, "something else may be coming that you will prize less highly. You have heard of the death warrants of the bureau, Suzanne?"

She went suddenly rigid. There had never at any time been any natural color in her cheeks but her eyes were terrible in their fixed stare.

"You do not really mean," she faltered, "that I am to die?"

"Precisely what I am contemplating," he answered coolly, "and quickly, too."

She threw herself on her knees by his side. He drew his chair away.

"Don't dare to touch me," he ordered. "You know that that sort of thing is forbidden. You have thrown away the chance of a generation. What was at the back of your head? Why did you let Costoli desert his ship?"

Real tears were streaming from her eyes.

"I prayed him not to," she pleaded. "I

(*Continued on page* 36)

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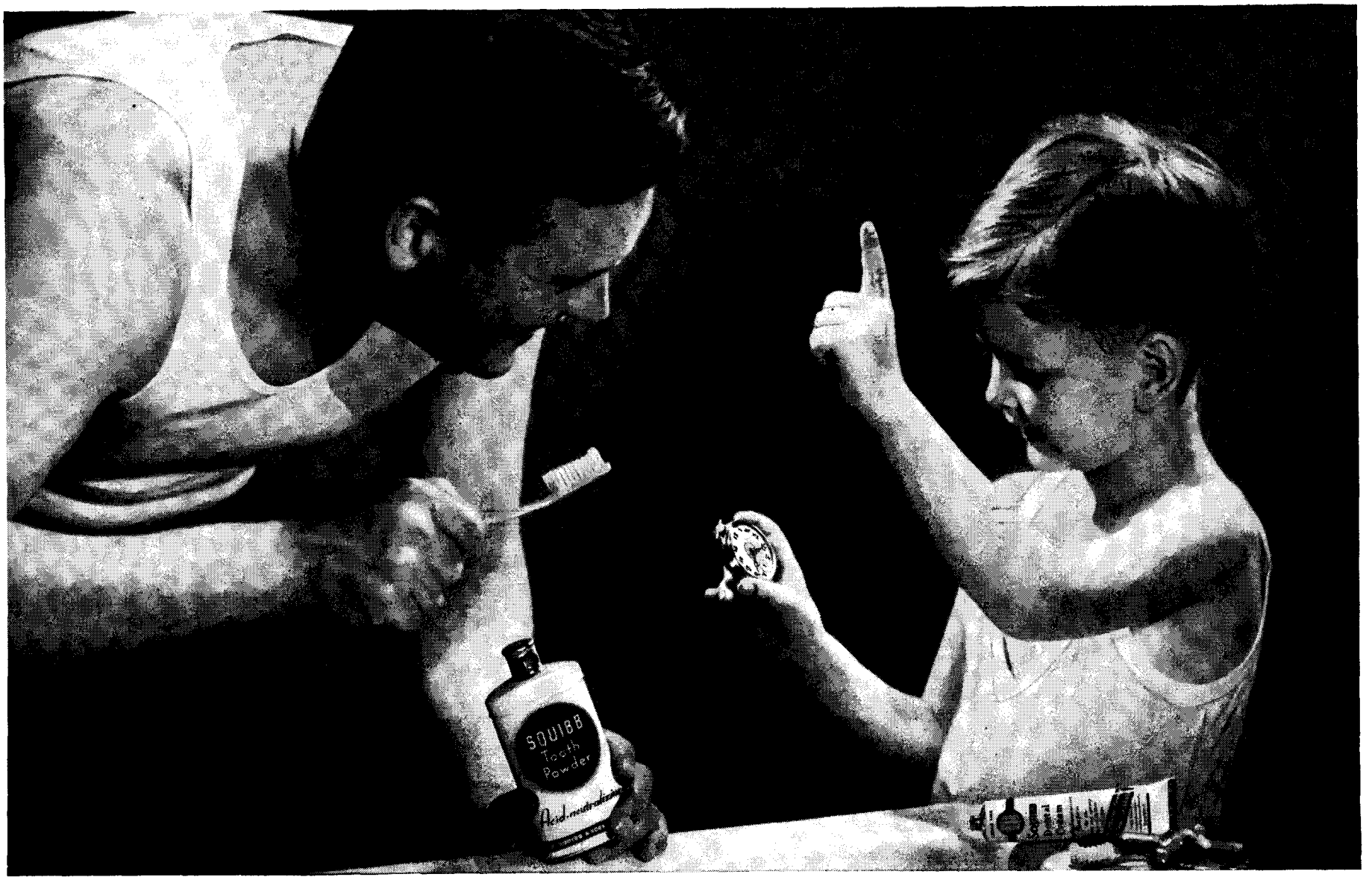

Most tooth decay can be prevented

BRUSHING the teeth is of far greater importance to children as well as adults when they realize it is part of a plan by which most tooth decay can be prevented.

This is no longer a hope. It is a plain statement of fact.

It means that many of the illnesses, much of the pain, and a great part of the expense which have their source in tooth decay are no longer necessary.

For more than seventy-five years the House of Squibb has worked with the dental and medical professions in their fight against disease. It is today stressing the Squibb Plan *by which most tooth decay can be prevented* because of the important part that this plan may play in the promotion of health.

In cooperation also with members of the dental and medical professions the House of Squibb has developed two dentifrices —Squibb Dental Cream and Squibb Tooth Powder. They are alike in the fact that both contain an element that penetrates into many tiny crevices where the toothbrush fails to reach and neutralizes bacterial acids wherever it comes in contact with them.

These two products can be purchased in drugstores everywhere at little cost and may provide the best possible daily home aid in safeguarding the health of teeth and gums.

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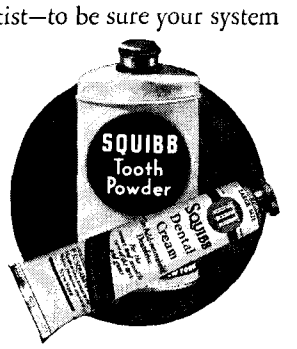
1. Go to your dentist and follow his advice. This will include the kind of toothbrush to use, and how to use it; what kind of dentifrice to use, and what kind not to use; and whether you should supplement your own home treatment with the use of dental floss and oral perborate.

2. Check your diet with your physician or dentist—to be sure your system is getting the elements essential to the health and strength of your teeth.

3. Brush your teeth thoroughly, at least twice a day, and be sure you use a dentifrice scientifically prepared to clean teeth effectively, and safely.



START TODAY *on the Squibb Plan for the care of the teeth and gums. It costs little and may prevent pain, ill health and expense later in life.*

SQUIBB DENTAL CREAM · SQUIBB TOOTH POWDER

The Priceless Ingredient of Every Product is the Honor and Integrity of its Maker

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(Continued from page 34)

pushed him out of my room. I bade him listen to the clock as it struck. I sent for a car I did all I could. My master, he was drunk—drunk in his soul—drunk with love for me—drunk as you will never be with any wine or for any woman. I lost my senses too, perhaps. I gave myself and then it was—too late. Antonio may know more. What if he joined you?"

"He lies there like a whipped cur," Mark said calmly. "I have no use, Suzanne, for those who betray their country for such paltry things as you. You have both earned death."

"Listen," she cried, "Costoli has a brother—you know that. He knows as much as Antonio ever knew. He could perhaps satisfy you. Antonio shall die—I promise you that. He will shoot himself this morning if I tell him that I am a spy and never loved him. But the brother—he was wild with love for me but he had brains enough to go to his admiral. He got a month's leave. He is in Toulon, I believe. If I send for him he will come."

The young man smiled sardonically.

"Get up," he ordered. "Do not think that you have triumphed. I have as much pity for you as I have for the rats they kill in the sewers day by day. Still, you have given me an idea. You want to live. It might be arranged."

"Tell me how," she implored. "I will do anything."

"Have you ever been to Warsaw?" Mark asked.

"I was born there," she confided.

"Ever hear of a family of the name of Agrestein?"

SHE became an animate person again through the sheer shock of surprise.

"Warsaw millionaires," she cried. "It was Paul Agrestein's grandson who took me to Paris."

He glanced up from a small book at which he had been gazing.

"These dossiers have their value," he remarked. "This one, my dear Suzanne, may save your worthless life. You want to live, I gather."

"As a bird wants to sing," she answered wildly. "I have life in me. It hurts. I *will* live."

"Well, you were the mistress of young Paul Agrestein," he observed. "That may make a difference. Sit up and listen to me."

She obeyed at once. Mechanically her fingers stole into the little bag which had fallen to the floor. He laughed as he saw her use her vanity case.

"Not worth while for me," he told her contemptuously. "Listen—the Costoli business is finished. You, yourself, have brought it to an end and it will be better for you to disappear for a time. For the moment you are reinstated. You go back to your lover. He is sober now?"

"He is what I choose to have him," she said carelessly. "He has lost his spirit."

"Take him away from here in an hour's time," Mark directed. "You can order a car. Take him to one of the hotels. Engage a suite of apartments. By the way, be sure that he takes his revolver with him."

"What is to be the end?"

"He is to shoot himself tonight. See that he does it."

He pointed to the door and she slunk away, closing it behind her.

"IT IS the man with the bags," Catherine Oronoff announced as she stood, a short time later, by the side of Mark Humberstone's desk.

"What about him? He has all his instructions."

"He wants to know if he can give his ridiculous show at the Jetée Casino. He prefers," she continued, "to establish his identity at any place where he is likely to stay for any length of time."

"I see no objection. As it happens I wish to speak to him. Telephone, if you please, that he is to come in at once."

In a few minutes Mr. Jonson appeared. He had changed his clothes to a well-fitting suit of dark blue and he wore a bunch of violets in his buttonhole.

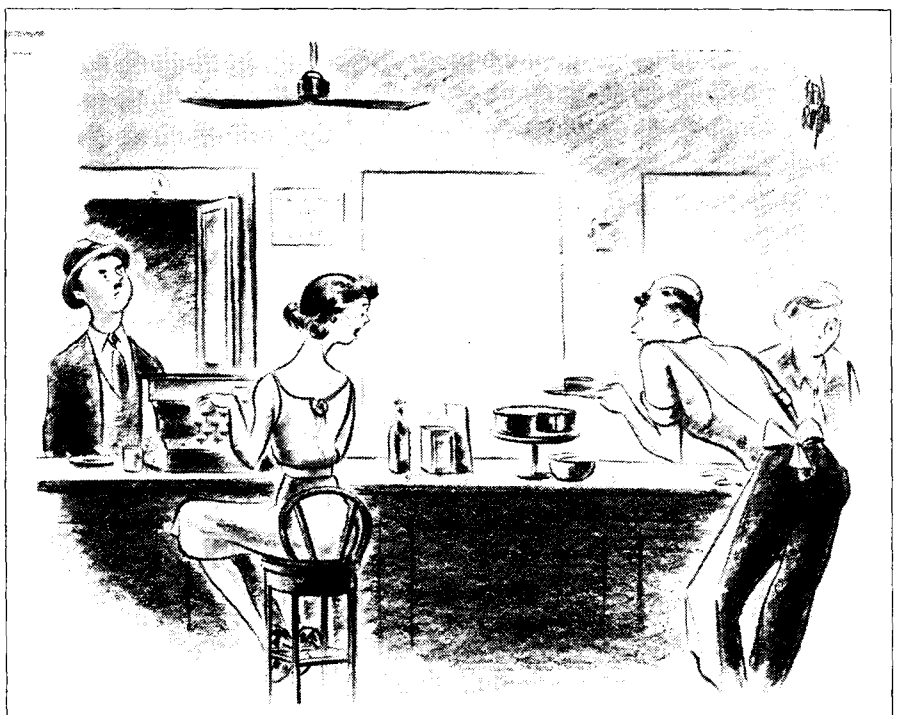
"What sort of a man are you, I wonder?" Mark speculated.

"My deeds will show. Among other things, I possess the art of divination. You have sent for me to ask some question with regard to Warsaw. Is it not so?"

Mark, if he felt any surprise, disclosed none. He flicked away the ash from the cigarette which he was smoking.

"Another Casino trick?" he remarked smiling. "Well, I fall. Have you ever, I wonder, heard of the house of Agrestein?"

"I seem to remember," Mr. Jonson said, gazing straight into the sunlight with unblinking eyes, "that Paul Agrestein, the head of the family, still lives in the old palace."



"He says the soup tasted like water and rolls like sawdust. How much is that?"

BEN ROTH

"He would be a man of what age?"

"About sixty."

"He travels sometimes this way?"

"I have heard of him in these parts once," Mr. Jonson admitted. "He and his father before him had the reputation of being great gamblers."

"The Poles have that proclivity," Mark observed, rising to his feet.

"Have I your permission, sir, to depart?" the visitor asked.

"Why?"

"My men are at work fixing my apparatus at the Casino. It has to be very accurate and the performance commences at five o'clock. I need a particular sort of lunch first and I have not yet cashed any money."

"You may go," Mark acquiesced.

The magician rose to his feet smiling. He bowed to Catherine Oronoff and he bowed to Mark Humberstone. The latter looked curiously at the door through which, in a moment or two, he had disappeared.

"I am beginning to wonder," he speculated, "whether I am wise in accepting the services of a clairvoyant."

She shook her head.

"He is no clairvoyant," she declared. "When he entered the room you had his passport in your hand. Three times you turned back to the page where his Warsaw visa was inscribed."

"That is all very well," Mark agreed. "A reasonable explanation, indeed, but I am becoming suspicious about the fellow," he went on thoughtfully. "He stops the earth with his forefinger in places of public amusement, and he apprehends already, I believe, my interest in Warsaw."

SEATED opposite to one another at a small table on the terrace of the restaurant of the Colombe d'Or, drinking the white wine of the country out of thick tumblers whilst they waited for their trout, Catherine Oronoff and Mark Humberstone breathed the atmosphere of a different world. Spring was warm in the air.

"Was this wise?" she asked.

"It was not only wise," he answered, "but it was necessary. For days you have been looking pale and tired. It was time we broke away. You work too hard. For you, at any rate, it is not worth it."

"Why do you say that?"

"Because," he said, leaning slightly forward in his chair, "you work too conscientiously and you are simply doing the work which finishes each day when the bureau is closed. You are just where Mr. Cheng has placed you and where I found you."

"I am an automaton, of course," she agreed a little impatiently. "When I think of you and Mr. Cheng, I know that I am. But then, you see, you are up in the high places, you are working among the clouds. It is only now and then that you come down to move the pawns."

"We are working at a great scheme," Mark admitted. "We will talk of it sketchily," he added, glancing around at the empty tables close at hand. "I'll tell you one thing, Catherine, which impresses me more every day. Mr. Cheng is one of the greatest personalities I have ever come near."

She nodded.

"I am interested," she acknowledged. "He seems always so remote and yet he never makes a mistake. He seems to have mastered the philosophy of quietism."

"He lives in the clouds," Mark observed, "and yet when he comes down to earth he seems to know everything that has happened. He moves about just as naturally as a courtier or a statesman. And work! Do you know, Catherine, that we were up in the great dispersing room for fourteen hours with those Army men from Washington. Cheng never left us. He ate and drank scarcely anything and when we had finished he was the freshest of the lot."

"Some day," she remarked, "I suppose I shall know what it is all about."

He reached across the table and clasped the fingers of her left hand.

"We are working for a great end, Mr. Cheng and I," he said. "Years ago we talked and dreamed of it when we were at Harvard together. Since I became one of the legatees of my father's great discoveries we have, step by step, evolved a definite plan of campaign."

"For what purpose?" she asked.

HE SAW with delight the birth of that faint light of interest in her eyes.

"We are working," he confided, "at a vast scheme which is now beginning to take definite shape day by day. We want to succeed where all the more experienced statesmen of the world have failed. We want to bring to the world the genesis, at any rate, of permanent peace."

She shook her head dubiously.

"You are both dreamers," she said.

He withdrew his hand from hers and poured out wine. They continued their lunch. Every now and then he glanced at her. There was a change already, he told himself joyfully.

"All this coming and going of strangers, of men of every nationality," he went on presently, "has meant something. I could tell you wonderful things, and I shall before long, of what is happening on the top floor of our huge building. We may not be able yet to speak to the stars, Catherine, but there is never a night when we do not speak for hours, never a day when we are not making plans with Mr. Cheng's friends in China. We are in touch in a new way with a new world and all the time we are building and making ready."

"Mark," she exclaimed, "why are you telling me all this?"

"I trust you," he answered.

"But ought you to? You know so little about me."

"More than you think," he assured her. "I know, for instance, that Catherine Oronoff is about a tenth part of your name. I know that you are a kinswoman of all the Romanoffs. I know that Alexander is your cousin and I know that it is he, in the eyes of a few at any rate, who is the legitimate ruler of your people. Mr. Cheng knew this when he brought you here. The secrets of the bureau pass through your hands. Mr. Cheng has placed his absolute trust in you because he possesses that wonderful instinct which never fails him. I trust you, too, for another reason."

"You may," she said softly. "I am beginning to wonder what there is left that you can have to tell me."

He leaned across the table. He stretched out his hand and she clasped it eagerly.

"Our plans," he told her, "will involve vast changes in your own country, Catherine. But there must be silence."

"There shall be silence," she promised.

THEY drank their coffee and smoked cigarettes in the lazy spring sunlight. There was actually a faint flush of color in Catherine's cheeks, a new life in her face and movements. She sighed with regret when Mark called for the bill and rose to his feet.

"We must go?" she asked reluctantly.

He nodded. He, too, was a different man.

"Do you know where we are going?" he asked, as they walked hand-in-hand across the little palisaded garden.

"Back to the bureau—yes?"

"Not for the moment," he answered. "We are going to the Jetée Casino. I want to see our new friend's performance."

(To be continued next week)

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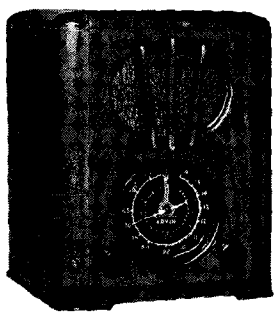
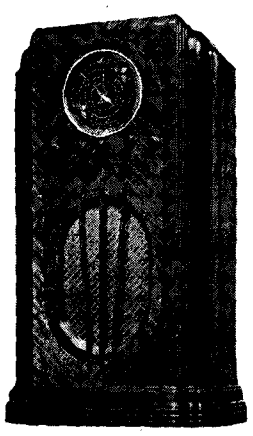
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"This little Arvin is lovely, Jim—it plays grand and it looks so nice in here."
"Right you are—it's better than our big set downstairs—let's get an Arvin down there, too!"



RHYTHM BABY MODEL 417—another splendid little AC table set in walnut-finished cabinet, only $19.95. Prices slightly higher Denver and west.

For only $24.95, you can take your choice of a walnut, antique white, or maple-finished cabinet, when you buy the Arvin Rhythm Belle Model 467 shown in use above. It is a beautiful little radio for your bedroom, your youngster's room, the social room, your den or office. And when you hear how well it plays, you'll buy an Arvin for your living room, too. There, you'll probably want a console, like the splendid model at right, or a big table set, perhaps. Whatever you want, Arvin has—table models from $19.95 to $59.95—consoles from $49.95 to $150.00—including AC-DC portables and battery sets. At right: Rhythm Queen Model 927, a very beautiful 9-tube all-wave console in matched-grain walnut cabinet, $99.50.



HEAR ALL THE GOOD PROGRAMS *Perfectly* with one or more of the new 1937 ARVIN RHYTHM RADIOS

ARVIN Rhythm RADIOS

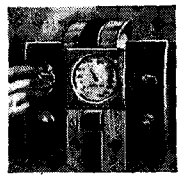
The little Arvin table models pictured above don't get foreign-speaking stations—but they do bring you all the *worthwhile foreign programs* that are rebroadcast by the National and Columbia chains. They also bring you all the fine American programs, more beautifully than the big, old-fashioned sets in so many homes today. And they get police, amateur and airway signals, too.

If you want worldwide reception of foreign stations, hear the Arvin consoles or larger table models. They have a wonderfully efficient foreign tuning system built in—with the foreign stations named and logged on the big, reverse-lighted, clock-face dials. A traveling spotlight makes it easy to see and locate the station you want on any wave band—and the high-low-speed tuning drive, controlled by one knob, makes foreign tuning fast and accurate. And those are but a few of the many features Arvin offers in worldwide radios.

More than mere "features"—the new Arvins have rhythm in their eye-catching beauty, rhythm in their ear-pleasing tone. They are beautiful to look at and beautiful to hear. And there's *so much to hear* this year—your family needs at least two radios. Most dealers sell Arvins on easy terms.

NOBLITT-SPARKS INDUSTRIES, *Inc., Columbus, Ind.*
Also makers of Arvin Hot Water Car Heaters

IN YOUR CAR, TOO, ENJOY AN ARVIN *Tailor-Fit* CAR RADIO



You can have an Arvin installed exactly the way you want it—with a perfect matching remote control in your instrument panel—with the speaker overhead, in-the-set or mounted separately on the dash. New, high-powered Model 38 has exceptional ability to reach out and bring in stations, beautifully. You can enjoy an Arvin Car Radio for as little as $39.95.

ARVIN Rhythm RADIOS

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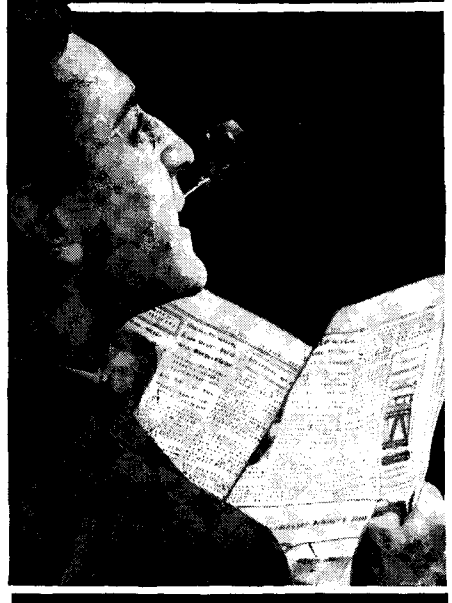
"It was a little shop on a side street... Guess how I found it?"



SHE FOUND IT IN . . .

SHE looked in the 'yellow pages' for the product she wanted. There she found the nearest dealer's name, address and telephone number . . . She is one of millions of sensible shoppers. Are you another?

BELL SYSTEM
AMERICAN TELEPHONE & TELEGRAPH CO. AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES

Napoleon the Fifth

Continued from page 15

growing more distinct as it approached Bancroft's room. A nurse came through the door.

"Good morning," the girl said.

Nap smiled. "I've never seen a better."

Here ought to be his news source, his point of information. He must do his digging quickly, but carefully. If Rosemary Pryor was in the hospital, the nurse would know it; that is, she would know if a woman answering Mrs. Pryor's description was a patient.

The nurse said, "After I've unpacked your bag, Mr. Barton, you're to rest until supper—"

"How about lunch?"

"Didn't you have any?"

Nap said, "I seem to have missed it." After all, he was suffering from breakdown; he pressed his hand to his head and tried to look ill. "My poor head," he said, and went to work. "I suppose you've more people, even women, who—"

Professionally, she neglected replying, and, instead, opened the bag. Nap, now, turned red, as she lifted out the purchases he had made in the town. Several gray feathers from a duster. A sunbonnet which he had shaped into a tricorn and on which he had printed N B in red ink. A pair of canary yellow stepins. A bronze medal with "A Scout is Clean" enameled on it. Stage properties.

The nurse said gently, "I'll darken the room. Go to sleep."

"No lunch? Not even a poached egg?" Since Nap knew about hospitals, he went on, as she pulled the shades, "I want a private nurse. I'm a sick man. I can't sleep unless someone's here." He waved his arms. "I see things in the dark."

The girl said, "I'll stay."

"Until I'm asleep." Nap wanted her there, not only because he was playing a part, but because he intended to talk, not sleep. Have her talk.

Janet Heath repeated, "I'll stay."

"I believe you will," said Nap.

He lifted his head while the little nurse removed pillows, and then he stretched out. The bed didn't feel hard now. It felt rather wonderful. How much sleep had Yee Yick allowed him? Couple of hours? Lord, how sleepy he was! If he just dozed for a few minutes, he'd do a better job. Much better. Just a few minutes....

Nap slept.

VOICES woke him, low voices, but one with a rasp in it, and for a moment he wondered where he was. He lay without moving and opened one eye.

The nurse was whispering. "Look at the things he had in his bag, Doctor. I thought I shouldn't leave. It's my half day; I was going off duty anyhow—"

"You were told," the male voice rasped, "to report to me." There was silence, once, and then, "You look sweet today, Jan," and, immediately, the crisp sound of a starched uniform being crushed.

"I'm Cupid," said Nap, sitting up. "Where's my bow?"

In the darkened room, it still seemed to Bancroft that the girl had attempted to escape the embrace. Otherwise, it was all none of his business.

"Ah," the man said. "Feeling rested, Mr. Barton?" He came to the bed. "Miss Heath informs me that you wish a private nurse. She is on general duty, but we'll see to it that someone else is—"

"Heath, Heath, we want Heath," chanted Nap. "What'll Dr. Richardson say when I tell him I can't have a nurse . . . or anything to eat?"

Dr. Griffin said, "Now, just relax."

When the doctor left the room, with the nurse accompanying him as far as the door, Nap saw that the man pinched the girl's cheek. And the funny part of it was that it bothered Nap. Why? He'd seen Sue with a man's arm around her; seen her kissed. Why should this make his heart begin to beat quickly?

He called, "Oh, Doctor . . . how'd you like a punch on the nose?"

When the girl returned, Nap said, "Why didn't you let him have it?"

She looked at him curiously, and then intently; the light was on now. Before she could speak, there was a high, wild scream, which reached an impossible peak, and then fainted down into silence.

"Wow," said Nap.

"I'll read to you," Janet Heath told him.

"Who yelled?"

"Someone was laughing," the nurse said hastily. "That's all."

Nap demanded, "Laughing! D'you think I'm completely cuckoo?"

The girl sat down and looked at Nap. "No," she said. "I don't think there's anything the matter with you."

THAT wouldn't do. Not yet. Not until he sounded her out. "There's everything the matter with me," Nap growled. "Look at my eyes. I'm apt to stand on my head. Or kiss you. No telling. Or—"

"You," said Janet slowly, "are going to ask me questions in a minute, aren't you? I know what you are." She spoke steadily, coldly. "A reporter."

"Me? Not me." Nap thrust the fingers of his right hand into his pajama coat and struck an attitude. "There were five hundred Hussars behind the cannon," he said, "and at a word from me, they said, 'General, let us die for you.' I gave the command. I said—"

Janet Heath stood up. "I'll tell the superintendent," she said. "I don't know what it's all about, and I don't care. There's something funny. We haven't had any newspapers here for a week. A new regulation. Supposed to keep patients from seeing anything exciting, but we girls can't have them either."

"I'll—"

"You won't do anything," Janet snapped. She was, Nap thought, prettier than he had at first supposed. Nice chin. "You," she said, "are the lowest thing in the world. A reporter. Coming into a sanitarium where people are sick . . . you ought to be ashamed of yourself. That's how reporters do. They're horrible. One of them took my picture when I was given the Bancroft award at St. William's, and did it so that I was all leg . . . and the matron said it was horrible and wouldn't keep me after graduation, and . . ."

"I'll bet," said Nap, "that Bancroft himself pinned the medal on you."

"He did," the girl said, "and there was a picture of him giving it to me. I cut it out and kept it." Then she stared at him. "Oh," she gasped.

"It's the fatal beauty of the family," said Nap. "Anyhow, you can't say I've lied to you. I am Napoleon—"

"The fifth one. You make quintuplets. We've had four already. But, why—"

Now was the time to talk. Nap went squarely at it. "You wouldn't suppose that the reason no newspapers are allowed is because one Rosemary Pryor is hidden here? I may have done a rotten job of medal-pinning, but I'm a swell reporter. She's five feet four inches high, weighs a hundred and twenty-six. Blue eyes, but I like brown ones. Blond hair, waved. Talks with a slight, and phony, Southern accent. Lisps when she remembers, too."

"The woman in 216!"

"And you still don't like reporters?"

Janet Heath said, "It's the woman . . . Dr. Griffin's patient. Who is Mrs. Pryor?"

"The answer to the reporter's dream. So are you. By the way, do you encourage this Griffin, or shall I bust him?"

Janet said, a different note in her voice, "He . . . oh . . ."

"So I bust him. On the way out."

The girl didn't smile. "Are you sure you can leave? You've been admitted as a patient, and the doctors are all good friends—"

Nap's long legs stuck out over the edge of the bed. "Get my pants," he said. "Watch me. Or . . . would they get tough?"

"The attendants would hold you. And everything here, doors, gates, are locked. Can't you wait until night? The window in my room isn't barred, but there's a twelve-foot fence and barbed wire and—"

"Love will find a way," grinned Nap. He consoled her with, "And tomorrow you will be anything you want to be at St. William's."

Janet said gravely, "Thank you. Hospitals don't ignore requests from important people. They grant them, and, a few months later, discharge the nurse. They do not want patients to say, 'Aren't you the nurse who . . .'"

"Have you ever heard of the Chinaman named Ah Fooey?" asked Nap.

"What? . . . oh . . . you don't believe it. Anyhow, I'm not going to stay." She was silent, and then said quietly, "That woman was here before. We all thought Dr. Griffin was going to marry her. He was always with her. And he can make things difficult for nurses."

"He won't much longer," said Nap. His thoughts were racing; he was building up his story. "What a pretty way it was all handled, if my guess is right. Griffin's the man. He'd know how to do a workmanlike job of strangling. He brings her here after the crime. They wait until things calm down, and then they both leave the country with whatever of Pryor's money she's grabbed. Oh, it's a sweet story. But what was she yowling about?"

"Nerves. She's been given sedatives."

When the nurse went for his dinner tray, Nap was amazed that he had forgotten all about Sue.

NAP slid to the ground first, then caught the nurse as she followed him from the window of her room. Without thought, as he held her, he kissed her, quickly, comradely, and she kissed him back.

She whispered, "Now I can tell my grandchildren that once I kissed Nap Bancroft."

With astonishment, Nap realized that no other kiss had left him with such a strange tingling; something was wrong. Probably the lack of dinner. He tried to kiss her again, but she had already slipped away.

They crouched down when a machine came through the gate and up the driveway, and then Janet guided him toward the wall. She carried an oblong white bundle, the sheets from her bed, which Nap intended to use in scaling the wall . . . he finally tied them together, and began to try throwing the looped end about the posts which held the wire.

"Up you go," he whispered. "Wait there for me. I'll go down first."

The nurse was at the top of the fence, standing on the brickwork, when a gong rang in the sanitarium, and another at the outer gate. Lights blazed in the garden, and Janet, on the fence, was instantly revealed.

"They've missed me," Nap said. "Slide

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down. Try to get to town. Call my paper. Tell 'em—"

Then men were running toward him; as he turned to face them, the girl jumped, and, at the same instant, threw the end of the sheet back toward Nap.

An attendant came at him with arms swinging, and Nap, ducking, spun him around with a long, clean blow; he ducked one himself from the opposite side, and sent a doctor sprawling to the grass.

"The first man who moves," Nap yelled, "gets a bullet in him."

He didn't wait after that, but pulled himself to the top of the fence. Barbed wire cut into him like fishhooks, and then he jumped.

The girl was waiting.

"I knew you'd come," she said, as they ran side by side. "I knew it. I . . . here comes another machine!"

The lights were on them before they could hide. There was not one machine but several and, while the first stopped, the others continued toward the gate. Nap's cameraman jumped out.

"We didn't know what would happen to you," he said. "We—"

"Get me back to town," said Nap. "To a telephone. Then you can worry about me all you want. And don't talk. She's there."

The car was moving before the cameraman said, "There's a country correspondent for you. He told his friends, including the yap who handles the Globe's stuff here, that he was going to be a big shot on our sheet. Said rival asks, 'How come?' and our man says you promised it. Says you told him personally. The Globe boy wants to know what you're doing here, and our man gets foxy. Says you're up here to take a rest at the sanitarium! So the Globe fellow phones it in, and they put two and two together and fluff up a story."

Nap blinked. "What's another story?" he said.

"The Globe, boss, gives you a sweet slap in the puss this time. They've got it that you attempted suicide after the turndown and had to be put away."

"Did they?" Nap growled. "Well, we'll feed them arsenic, if this can only be kept quiet for a half hour or so. So what did you do?"

"Went to the D. A. here. Told him we'd give him a big play if he kept his mouth shut to the other correspondents. I didn't know what else to do. It looked like we had to hurry. . . ."

The star stopped at the courthouse.

"And," said the cameraman, "I stopped long enough to get the office and tell 'em to be ready for you. If it can be held for the first edition . . . if the other sheets don't get it . . ."

"They won't," said Nap. He turned to the nurse as the car stopped. "Come along and see how we do it," he said.

NAP called the state capital first: "Commissioner," he said, "this is Nap Bancroft. Certainly I'm sober, and it didn't hurt you to wake up. Are we still friends? Good. So I want to ask a favor and I'm going to do you one. Listen . . .

"That's right. Mrs. Pryor. She's being picked up right now. And, I think, the man also. I want you to get in touch with the authorities here and shut them up until we have an edition on the street in the morning. You can't? Oh, yes you can. That's better.

"Details? What do you want at this time of night? But it's entirely possible that this doctor may've put something in old Pryor's highballs, and had been doing it for a long time and then got tired of waiting . . . remember that Pryor looked dopey when he came to the night club, according to testimony? The woman and Griffin must've been . . . but you figure that out. I'm hungry. If you ever want to go on a diet I'll tell you the best place to do it . . .

"What? You're trying to put on weight? Well, don't go there. Your wife wouldn't approve. You ought to see the nurses . . ."

Nap hung up the receiver.

The girl was standing necessarily close beside him in the booth; Nap discovered that he had his arm around her. When she looked up, he said, "And I'd hoped we'd be pals. Do you put perfume in your hair or is it that way? Have you ever been kissed in a telephone booth?"

"No. And I'm not going to be now."

"You're wrong."

What a lot, Nap thought, as he held her more tightly, had happened in the last few hours. He'd lost his girl, had stumbled over the story of the year, and he'd also lost his head. He didn't want to find it again, either. Then a sudden notion came to him, and he began to laugh.

"Darling," he said, "if you knew me a million years you wouldn't know me any better. I'm a crazy reporter. No sense. Will you marry me?"

Janet said in a level voice, "No."

"I'll stay home nights," said Nap.

"And," said Janet, "you'll even things with that other newspaper by printing the story of how you came to the sanitarium to get me . . . to marry me . . . and . . . oh, you're a reporter!"

"You bet I am," said Nap. "A good one. It's a swell story . . . if you like me." He wondered how she'd guessed what he had been thinking. "If you don't like me," Nap continued, "it's all off. But we could have fun together."

HE CALLED another number, his own; he heard Yee Yick's chattering voice in a moment:

"Where you been? You dlunk? You clazy? You—"

"Go to hell," said Nap. "You fix number one breakfast or I'll send you back to China and your first wife'll beat you. I want raspberries and fresh pancakes and bacon and . . . and for two."

Yee Yick's voice came thinly, "You moh damn' fool? You catch othoh girl?"

"He wants to know," said Nap to Janet, "if I've caught you. Have I?"

She couldn't move away; she said, "Mr. Bancroft—"

"We could have fun together."

"That's what I'm afraid of."

Nap said, "You mustn't be afraid."

This, to him, was the most amazing part of the entire performance. It dwarfed everything. It wasn't real.

"I've never had time to play," said Janet. "If I did . . . if I found that I . . . liked you . . . and then . . ."

"Liked me?" Nap said. "Is that all? Say, woman, a thing like this happens only once in a million years." He put his hand under her chin. "If you think I'm merely seducing you, I want you to know that I use a different system for seduction."

Janet's heart missed a beat. "Which . . . which would you prefer . . . if you were a girl?"

"Well," said Nap; "well. So that's the sort of girl you are! Where's your modesty? You ought to be ashamed of yourself. What's happened to our sweet womanhood? I'm going to have somebody do a feature about it. Nice and sloppy and sentimental and . . . oh, lord, I haven't called the Desk yet!"

Janet's eyes were glowing.

"I know you haven't," she said. "You said it was a marvelous newspaper story, but . . . you . . . you waited . . ."

"And I can wait a minute longer," said Nap.

No kiss had ever been so sweet.

Strange noises were coming from the receiver; when Nap put it to his ear he heard Yee Yick's angry whimper: "Hola! You hear me? Whassa mattah allo time? You hear? I say, 'You catch?'"

Nap's arm was still tight about Janet.

"I catch," he said.

5 Stops

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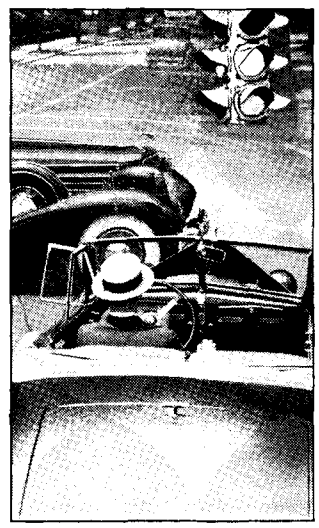

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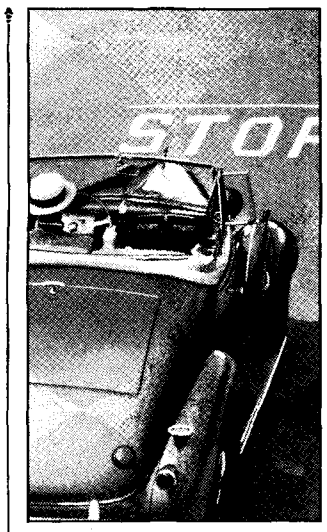

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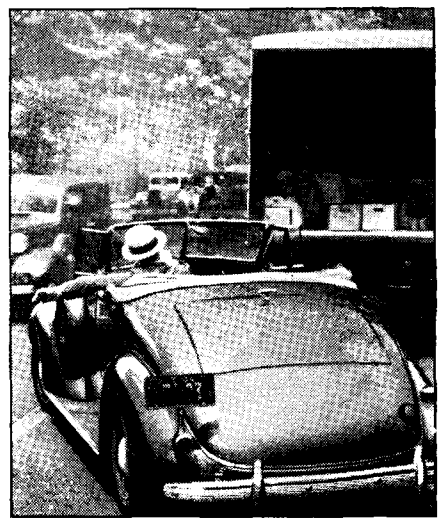

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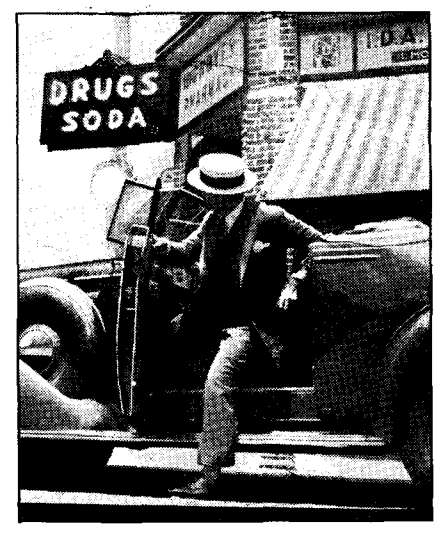

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Bread into Roses

Continued from page 22

Went in beautiful evening regalia to galleries, met dignitaries, talked art to the little group of art patrons who had arranged the loan exhibition. She and the artist and his pretty little blond sister would walk about among the crowd and be pointed out—

"I'll truly make up my mind tonight, Ross. I'll telephone you in the morning, positively."

"I couldn't come up tonight and have a bite of dinner with you and find out how you feel about it then?"

"We're having a foursome dinner and bridge at Jean's."

"Have a headache instead."

She laughed wearily. A faint incessant headache, a strain from too many tears, was always with her now.

"I can't. But I'll telephone you."

He walked home with her; saw her into her own elevator. When she had left him he took a telegram from his pocket.

"Regret to inform you loan exhibition opening postponed one week," the telegram said. "Death of mayor's wife causes change of date. Arrangements otherwise as scheduled for one week from original date. Kindest regards."

It was signed by the chairman of the Boston Committee for the Loan Exhibition. Ross looked thoughtful as he reread it. Afterward he tore it to small fragments and dropped them into a convenient rubbish can in the street. As he turned toward his next stopping place in Valetto's studio he began to whistle softly.

BOSTON looked dark and forbidding in the blackness of a winter night. Snow was piled up in the streets; a bitter wind blew across the snow. Susannah, wearied and flushed from four and a half hours in the Boston train, looked about the station confusedly. Ross was there; he came forward smiling in relief, and took possession of her and her bag.

"You! Shouldn't you be at the gallery, fighting about something?" Susannah said, hurried along by him through the churning confusion of the big station, helped into a taxicab, and smiling from the richness of her heavy furs at her companion.

"I couldn't have you arrive and run all this yourself," he said. He had registered for her at the big hotel; they went upstairs at once, and Susannah took possession of a luxurious room, as she had taken possession of so many luxurious rooms in London, in Paris, in Miami, everywhere.

"Is your sister here?" she said, coming out to join him in the sitting-room of the suite half an hour later, at her loveliest in peacock-green lamé. Ross was superintending the arrangement of a little supper table by an open coal fire. "Oh, this is delightful!" Susannah went on. "Let's take it very easy, and be late at the party!"

"Let's!" he agreed, with a flash of white teeth in his dark face.

She took a velvet chair by the fire and commented approvingly upon the hotel.

"I've never been here before, and I think this is lovely."

"I've ordered practically nothing. Oyster stews and salad and cheese."

"It's a night of all nights for oyster stews. There seems to be so much more winter than we need this year. I'm so horribly tired of cold, and too-hot places, and going from them out into *cold* again," Susannah complained. "Where's your sister?"

"I don't know. She hasn't sent me any word. Exactly like Lavinia; she never lets anyone know what she's doing. But she'll be here," Ross said easily. The waiter put the oyster stews on the table and disappeared. "The truth is, Sanna," Ross went on, when they were alone, "the mayor's wife died on Friday, and they've put off the show."

"Oh? For how long? You might have told me before I got myself into evening clothes."

"Week from tonight."

"Oh, dear! When'd you know, Ross?"

"Only today."

"STUPID!" Susannah said. "Perhaps Lavinia saw something about it in some paper. I saw the newspaper notice of the funeral, or something," she added, busy with her oysters. "But it never occurred to me that it would change the plan. Well, that means going back—with the trip for nothing—"

"Don't say for nothing; this is something," the man said mildly.

"Oyster stew is certainly something. I never tasted anything more delicious! But just the same it's maddening to have come all this way, and then have the thing put off."

"One of the dear ladies who was buzzing around the galleries yesterday told me that it would give them more time to sell tickets," Ross said. Susannah's eyes came to his suspiciously.

"Ross, you knew yesterday!"

"No, no, no, that was today."

"Well," she said with no further comment, "it's eight o'clock. And I think the Symphony is here. We might slip in, a little late, since we're both dressed."

"Let's sit and talk instead," he begged.

Her level smile broke over him good-naturedly.

"Let's not. This illicit little dinner is quite excitement enough for us."

"Ah, but Sanna, it's such fun to be here together, just you and I, in a strange city, with the wind howling and a storm coming along! Why should we barge out into the bleak unfriendly airs of Boston? Let's sit and talk."

"Let's get a newspaper and find out if the Symphony is here. And after it you'll take me to the train."

"The train?" he asked in dismay.

"Certainly, you idiot. Do you think I want to spend the night and fill tomorrow morning somehow and not get home until five, if there's nothing to keep me here?"

"Why isn't this fun enough to keep you here?" Ross asked reproachfully.

"This is very nice. Only I'm sorry I didn't know in time to spare myself the trip," Susannah said inflexibly but mildly, "and I've got to get started back tonight."

"Sanna, what a Puritan you are!"

"I'm such a Puritan," she said, laughing, yet annoyed, "that the puritanical aspect of all this never occurred to me for one instant. I'm a married woman with a child, and I can go where I please without getting any thrill from the naughtiness of the escapade. If I wanted to, I'd go to Paris with you or any other man and let the gossips say what they liked and think what they liked! But I came up here to see the Loan Exhibition, and as there isn't any, I'm going home. You're an extremely charming person, Ross," Susannah added lightly, crossing behind his chair on the way to the telephone, "but I wouldn't come all this way just for an oyster stew with you. We can have one at my house any time you like!"

SHE called the porter's desk, asked about trains. There was a train at ten-twenty, a midnight train. The midnight train, then. A drawing-room for New York. And have the lower made up.

"Now, what about the Symphony?" she asked, coming back to the table. The waiter was taking away plates and substituting the salad course.

"Get me the newspaper from the table in that room," Ross said to the man, indicating the door opposite that of Susannah's bedroom. Her eyes went to his again.

"Is that your room?"

Ross did not answer until they were alone again.

"Why not, if we are so sure of ourselves?" he asked. "I thought Lavinia was coming when I engaged the suite. I thought you two would be in there and I'd be in here. I'm sorry if you don't like it."

"I don't like it at all," Susannah said simply. "It seems to me rather—elementary. It puts me in a silly position,

"At the sound of the gong, it will be 8 A. M., sir" THURSTON GENTRY

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Ross, racing up here to look at my own picture, and finding that even that excuse has been taken away from whatever brought me here!"

"I suppose I was a fool to think that you might like a little break like this, Sanna; the fire and the dinner and you and I here, and nobody the wiser. I'm not," Ross said in dignified resentment, "I'm not so elementary as to suppose that it would go any farther than that. Our dinner and an hour or two of talk, and then good night. And breakfast in the morning, and perhaps an hour at one of the old book stores. You and I had a marvelous hour at an old book store down on Astor Place the other day. There are book stores here—"

"I know there are." Susannah responded crisply, as he paused. "And there's a Symphony concert, I believe, and there's a train at eleven. It's made up at eleven, at least, and I'm going to be on it. So!"

"I can see nothing of a concert," Ross said sulkily, rustling pages. "I don't see why you can't be friendly. We've been meeting each other, looking at pictures and having walks, all week. Now you quite suddenly have gone *mean*."

"It there isn't a concert there's a movie," Susannah said, sitting down beside him and holding on to the other side of the newspaper. "Yes, there's a picture that I want to see, and there's the Broadway company in Hollywood Next Stop. Have you seen it?"

"No," he said. He threw aside the paper and put his arm about her. "Be nice to me," he said. "If you were living at this hotel you might ask me to dinner and sit and talk books for awhile—literature or charities or art or whatever you like."

"That would be different. I don't feel conversational," Susannah said definitely. "I'm going in now to change and pack. I'll be out in fifteen minutes and we can take my bag to the station and have the taxi man check it."

"Why won't you stay here and go down with me tomorrow? Why do you have to join with every other dear good decent woman in the world in thinking there's something wrong because a man and a woman happen to stay at the same hotel? Be a sport, Sanna. Lavinia may get here any minute; really she may. And you know me well enough to know that the minute you say you want to turn in I'll walk into that room there and lock the door."

"Of course I know it. You're the one whose mind evidently runs along the usual lines, Ross. It's simply that I don't want to stay, that I wouldn't have come if I'd known that the exhibition had been postponed, and that I'll be much happier getting home for Evelina's breakfast tomorrow!"

BRISKLY and composedly she returned to her room, dressed and packed, and came out to Ross looking quite her sophisticated best in her trim hat and heavy furs. A bellboy was summoned; her bag went downstairs; she and Ross followed it. Susannah affected to enjoy the movie immensely, despite the sulphurous silence of the man beside her; he left her at her train at twenty minutes before twelve.

"I hope you're not angry at me?" he said wretchedly, in the station. Her eyes met his unsmilingly.

"I think I am," she said measuredly. And when she was alone, the metal door of her drawing-room locked, her reading light lighted, and herself comfortable in the smoothness of the wide bed, she looked off her magazine thoughtfully for a moment and repeated the phrase aloud: "Yes, Mr. St. Hubert, I think I am. I think that was rather a—rather a low thing to do. I think it is exit for you from now on."

He came to see her two days later, and was dismissed. Even before Susannah could tell him that their friendship was at an end he knew it, and begged her not to send him away, to forgive him what was at worst a stupid thing to have done.

"It isn't a case of forgiveness, Ross. It's a case of my drifting into something that my heart isn't in at all. I don't blame you; I blame myself. It *was* rather thrilling to meet you at the galleries and walk and have tea. The old book store was fun. But I've let Nursey go now and I'm busy. And the Boston experience made me realize suddenly that —well, that my heart simply isn't in it at all."

"But I can come to see you?"

"After awhile. I'm worried now, Ross," Susannah said honestly, going to the door with him. "I'm not in the mood for engagements."

"I know what you're worried about, of course."

"Well—" she said forlornly. He stooped and kissed her hand quickly and went away, and Susannah went back into the empty house.

THE endless days went by; Susannah felt so wearied by unavailing thought that they all merged into one, and there was no morning, no afternoon, no time. The endless nights wheeled in blackness and cold over the city; snow fell white and pure in a gracious, unwrinkled mantle, became grimed and spotted and heaped into harsh banks hardly more manageable than so much coal, was shoveled away. And before the shovels had stopped clinking a fresh, delicate fluttering of white filmed the sidewalks again.

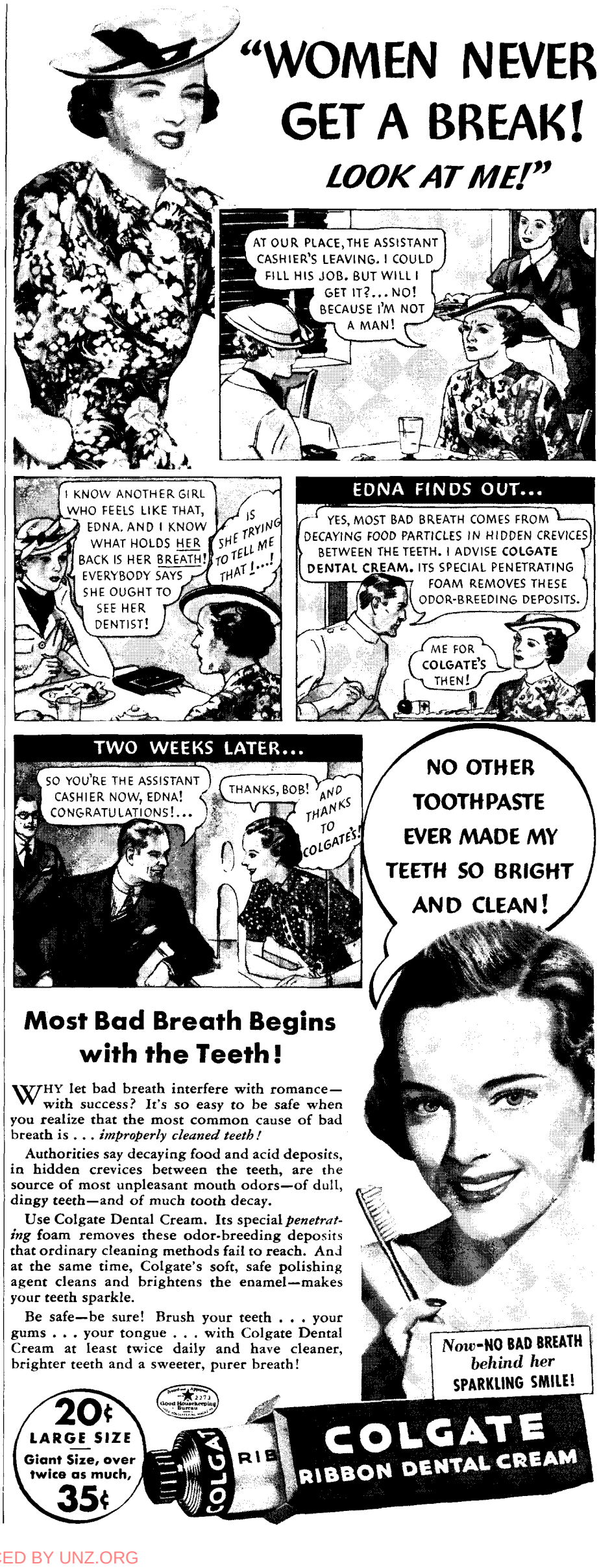
Evelina was zipped snugly into eider-down-lined garments of dark blue, her cap was firmly tied, her small fat hands were engineered into tiny gloves, and she and Milly went every afternoon into the park with a bucket, a spade, and two green tin molds with elephants stenciled upon them. They returned rosy and exhausted two hours later, and Susannah welcomed her daughter with hungry kisses, and began the happy process of getting her out of her clothes, into her warm bath, into a great soft warmed towel, into her mother's arms

After that there were cereal and rusk and applesauce and sometimes a small section of molasses taffy measured out as carefully and conscientiously by Susannah and Milly as if Evelina were not going to smear at least half of it on her face. Then Evelina had to be superficially sponged again as to visible portions of her person, and became highly entertaining in the warm well-lighted nursery, in a desperate effort to postpone her bedtime. She dashed about, beaming through chair backs and under lamp shades in effusive "peek-a-boos"; she whispered, "Pitty!" to her mother's rings, and plastered soft little meaningless kisses on her mother's cheeks.

In bed at last, she beat upon her blankets resentfully, accompanying the exercise with a gradually diminishing grumbling and scolding that presently died away into complete silence. Susannah usually sent Milly out to her supper and loitered in the nursery until this performance was over. Then came the loneliest, the hardest hour of her day; the hour that had always brought Alec home.

She would go into her bedroom and stand at the window staring aimlessly down at the lights of the city, pricking through the lengthening dusk of March and April; she would mechanically brush her hair, perhaps change her gown for dinner; she had no spirit left to go out even to the simplest of social gatherings. Theater and opera had lost their charm; voices and questions hurt her; she shrank away from curious eyes.

(Continued on page 42)


"WOMEN NEVER GET A BREAK! LOOK AT ME!"
AT OUR PLACE, THE ASSISTANT CASHIER'S LEAVING. I COULD FILL HIS JOB. BUT WILL I GET IT?... NO! BECAUSE I'M NOT A MAN!
I KNOW ANOTHER GIRL WHO FEELS LIKE THAT, EDNA. AND I KNOW WHAT HOLDS HER BACK IS HER BREATH! EVERYBODY SAYS SHE OUGHT TO SEE HER DENTIST!
IS SHE TRYING TO TELL ME THAT!...!
EDNA FINDS OUT...
YES, MOST BAD BREATH COMES FROM DECAYING FOOD PARTICLES IN HIDDEN CREVICES BETWEEN THE TEETH. I ADVISE COLGATE DENTAL CREAM. ITS SPECIAL PENETRATING FOAM REMOVES THESE ODOR-BREEDING DEPOSITS.
ME FOR COLGATE'S THEN!
TWO WEEKS LATER...
SO YOU'RE THE ASSISTANT CASHIER NOW, EDNA! CONGRATULATIONS!...
THANKS, BOB! AND THANKS TO COLGATE'S!
NO OTHER TOOTHPASTE EVER MADE MY TEETH SO BRIGHT AND CLEAN!
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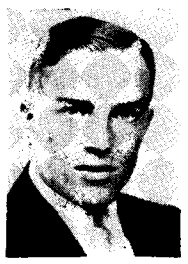

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Keep Up with the World

By Freling Foster

Of all the articles that have been found upon and imbedded in fishes, one of the most unusual was an automobile tire which encircled the body of a shark discovered floundering on the coast of Cuba near Havana. Owing to its extreme fatigue from trying to free itself of this tight and cutting encumbrance, the shark was easily lassoed and dragged ashore by two boys.

Henna is undoubtedly the oldest and most widely used cosmetic in history. From centuries before Christ to the present time, it has probably been used by a quarter of all people. Today at least five hundred million individuals, chiefly in northern Africa and the Orient, use it to dye their hair, nails, hands, feet, beards, and often to color the manes, tails and hoofs of horses and other animals.

In 1914 Americans in Europe were unable to get home because gold, the only acceptable currency, could not be obtained. So the U. S. Government went to their rescue, lending $717,300 to 13,600 of them on promissory notes. Shortly afterward 6,000 gratefully settled their debts. The other 7,600, however, still owe $300,000, or an average of $39 each, little of which will ever be repaid.—*By Philip Lotz, Ellicott City, Maryland.*

In many countries in which goat's milk is used extensively, most housewives are so skeptical of its freshness that the goatherds drive their herds from door to door and milk the animals in the customers' presence. Women living in apartment houses also insist upon this kind of assurance, even when they are too indolent to go down to the street, so the goat has to scramble up several flights of stairs to be milked in the kitchen.

Some kinds of elephant ivory, when subjected to sudden and extreme changes in temperature, have been known to crack with considerable violence. One such mishap occurred several years ago when a large Egyptian tusk, stored in the ivory warehouse on the London docks, split open with a noise like the explosion of a small bomb.—*By Lillian Anderson, Danielson, Connecticut.*

Every Brahman family in India possesses and offers daily sacrifices to its sacred Salagrama Stone, a little pebble which is found in countless numbers in the rivers of Nepal. The great reverence for these stones is illustrated by the annual festival given by the Maharaja of Orchha for his Salagrama. In some years the procession has included, among other things, 1,200 camels, 4,000 horses and more than 100,000 guests.

The only people who do most of their traveling through the tops of trees are the Ilongots, a tribe of Luzon in the Philippines. With a heavy knife they cut off the branch of one tree, slide the loop end of a 50-foot rope over it, then cast and catch the hook end of the rope over a branch of an adjoining tree. And with great agility, they travel across it in monkey fashion.—*By R. J. Wehrle, Norwood, Ohio.*

Among the many odd articles which are now manufactured entirely of glass are razor blades, springboards, fishing lines, book covers, frying pans, phonograph records, bells and violins.—*By Vereen McNeill Bell, Detroit, Michigan.*

Five dollars will be paid for each interesting or unusual fact accepted for this column. Contributions must be accompanied by satisfactory proof. Address Keep Up with the World, Collier's, 250 Park Avenue, New York City.

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(Continued from page 41)

Now and then she went to dine with Alec's mother. The two women did not discuss him. The older Mrs. Hazeltyne might ask if Susannah had had any word from him; Susannah's answer was always a brief negative. There was no real congeniality between them, but Susannah clung to anything that was a tie with Alec, and in the atmosphere of his mother's old-fashioned elegant rooms she felt safe; she did not have to do any pretending and explaining. Sometimes she took Evelina to see her grandmother in the afternoons; once the older woman expressed some anxiety about Alec's son, something had gone wrong at school and little Phil was unhappy, and Susannah took the long trip to Pomfret to see him. But the boys were on a tramp, it appeared; they had started early on the day of her visit and would not be back until night, and Susannah returned to town with no news of the child, except that he was physically well, and that his teachers were inclined to think his complaining letter had been written in a passing mood of discontent.

On a certain April morning when fresh winds were ballooning galleons of cloud against a blue sky, and crocuses and tulips were beginning to go about town in rickety horse-dragged carts, a certain young lawyer called upon Susannah. He was representing Mr. Hazeltyne, he explained, in the matter of the divorce.

Susannah listened to him with what stunned endurance she could muster until she understood that Alec was asking her to go to Reno and set him free. Then she coldly requested him to leave the house.

"I cannot discuss this at all. I think that's all we have to say to each other."

"YOU mean that you refuse, Mrs. Hazeltyne?"

"I mean that I absolutely refuse."

"And if my client went to Reno himself, or applied for a divorce through the French courts?"

"Then I would fight it."

"Mrs. Hazeltyne, you appreciate that these are very delicate matters and that it is as—as trying for us lawyers sometimes as for our clients," Mr. Baker said pleasantly. "Do you mind telling me why you refuse? Mr. Hazeltyne, before he left for Europe, placed this matter in our hands. It would simplify things very much if you would be kind enough to tell me just what your position is."

"I don't consider that it in any way concerns you," Susannah said, trembling.

"Only in a professional way, of course."

"Then you might tell your—your client that for the sake of my child, my position, for his own sake, I will not consider a divorce, now or at any time!"

"He is prepared to make you a very generous arrangement, Mrs. Hazeltyne."

"I have asked you to consider this interview as ended," Susannah said over her shoulder, from the window.

"I don't mean only in the matter of alimony," the lawyer hastened to say, on an apologetic note. "I mean as far as the child is concerned. Mr. Hazeltyne proposes to leave the little girl entirely in your hands."

"If you don't mind—" Susannah said, in a tense voice.

"Exactly. Mr. Hazeltyne," Franklin Baker pursued it lightly yet determinedly, "will probably not return until the fall. But we are in touch with him. He is reluctant, I know, to be the one to ask for this divorce. That's very natural. He wishes to protect you. He made a point of our not annoying you in any way. At the same time, since this has been put into our hands, I would like to ask you one question, if I may. Am I correct in believing that you went to Boston on the nineteenth of January and remained there for the night in the

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company of Ross St. Hubert, the portrait painter?"

Susannah walked swiftly from the room and through the adjoining dining-room to the pantry. Frost was there cleaning silver in the company of the admiring Agnes.

"Mr. Baker is leaving, Frost. Will you see him to the elevator?"

She went back to her own room. The taste of the late interview was like an actual acid poison in her mouth. Susannah jerked her head, trying to be rid of it, but her whole being was shaken and her breath came shallow and quick. It was as if spirit as well as body trembled at the indignity, the insult that this pleasant-voiced stranger had been empowered to come and offer her.

AFTER a luncheon in which she merely played with the food that seemed to be made of plaster of paris and chalk, she dressed herself for the street and walked rapidly, feverishly, to Margot Fielding's house. Margot had her own heavy anxieties now, for Jane, seven years old, had acquired an infected ear, and the doctors were allowing Jane another twenty-four hours of fever and pain before they resorted to surgery. Margot looked tired and her face was drawn with anxiety, but her patient was asleep, and she could spare Susannah an hour's talk.

"It doesn't sound like Alec!" Susannah finished, her color faded to ash. her eyes haggard, when she had finished her story.

"It isn't Alec. He simply discussed divorce with this lawyer, and the rest is the lawyer's own idea. Those are the methods they use," Margot said. She cocked her head toward the sickroom, listening.

"Margot, your heart's in there with Janey. My troubles can wait."

"No, no, Sanna. It's good for me to think about something else. No," Margot said, resuming the subject closest to Susannah's heart, "all divorces are like that, more or less. It's a cold, grisly business. It oughtn't to be allowed!"

"But if there weren't divorce," Susannah reasoned, "then Alec would be tied to a woman of whom he's tired, and I'd have to go on pretending that we loved each other."

"And a good thing too," Margot persisted stoutly. "You can't keep people loving each other at honeymoon tempo. But you *can* preserve the decencies! And that's exactly what Alexander Hazeltyne isn't doing, and I must say I'm disgusted with him, and Dud is too. Alec's first wife, Betty Livingston, was having affairs all over the place—Alec would have brained her eventually if a merciful Providence hadn't taken her off in the nick of time. She was a complete little fool! Then he gets a woman like you, Sanna, a woman *everyone's* in love with, and he must needs run after a little Russian—*poppet*, like Merle!"

"Margot, you're so comforting! What will I do?"

"I've been thinking it over for days. I'd simply go away," Margot said.

"I know; you said so on Sunday. Dud said to go to California to Mother. She's been there with Aunt Nona for six weeks, and they seem to be getting along serenely enough. But I can't do that! They think of me as at the very peak of happiness and success, and God knows I was!" Susannah said, tears suddenly flooding her eyes. "I can't go out there and be just one more divorced woman with a—with a grievance, and an alimony, and a child! It's for his sake as well as mine that I *won't*," she finished, in a lower, stubborn tone that was perhaps partly to convince herself.

"I don't think you should," Margot said promptly.

"Don't?" Susannah echoed, encouraged. But immediately she looked away into space again. "I don't know what to do," she said.

"I think he'd marry Merle instantly, if he could," Margot said. The words touched the other woman like flames.

"You do think so?" she asked, in a sick voice.

"Oh, yes. And when I think of any sane man marrying that—that superficial little transparent—" Margot hesitated over several nouns, finally chose a mild one. "That *person*," she said. "That complacent little self-centered egotist! Well, there's no use discussing her. It's you I'm interested in. I agree with you! I think it would be a mistake to go to California. There's a regular colony of divorced women there, comparing incomes and playing bridge. You'd hate it! No, you go somewhere else."

"Easthampton," Susannah suggested, with a little twist to her lips.

"Heavens, no. Not there. Listen, Sanna," Margot said reflectively, "what about your little place up in Connecticut—or is it over the Massachusetts border? Didn't Alec buy you a little farm up there a year or two ago?"

Susannah's sober face suddenly brightened; Margot, watching her, thought that she had not seen it so interested—so like the old Sanna, for many weeks.

"At Pemberton!" Susannah said. "My farm, I'd forgotten it! But it's an adorable place—it's wonderful. And alone, and quiet—" She interrupted herself, her face clouding. "But then he would think that I'd go there, he might remember it?" she submitted, on a questioning note.

"Well, if he did, Sanna?"

"Yes, of course." Susannah laughed ruefully. "If he only would!" she said honestly. And then, with irrepressible optimism: "He might, you know, Margot. If the baby and I were there, and it was summer, and he drove up just to see how we were getting along—he must feel *something* for us—he must still *like* us—"

Her throat closed and her eyes filled.

"IS IT modernized, Sanna? Is it fit to live in?"

"I don't know. I don't know anything about it, really, except that the outside is perfectly enchanting. Colonial, with chimneys, and tremendous trees, and with an old stone wall half propping the house and half holding the garden. We bought it—" Her voice dropped, softened. "Ah, that was a happy day," she said, under her breath. "We were driving through, on our way up to the Rogers' camp, and we stopped to have a tire changed, and we saw this farm. It had a big sign on it, and Alec and the Pinckneys and I walked about it and I simply went mad over it. Well, it seemed that Alec walked over to the little real estate office before the tire was finished, and about a month later, one night at dinner, he handed me a long envelope with the deed in it, and said, 'There's your summer home!' That was before Evelina was born, almost two years ago, and I've never seen it since. We could go there, couldn't we? We could go there. Nobody'd know, and nobody'd care where we were. It wouldn't be *too* primitive, and I could fix it by degrees." Her face grew thoughtful. "It doesn't solve anything—it's running away, really," she said, again on a musing note.

"He who fights and runs away lives to fight another day," Margot quoted bracingly.

"Yes, and this is a fight," Susannah conceded. Her narrowed eyes were fixed on space; she spoke dreamily. "For the first time in my life I have to fight," she said. "I have to do something that will interest him, that might hold him. This might be it."

(To be continued next week)

BACHELOR DAYS
WHERE AM I? WHAT'S THAT HORSE DOING HERE?
DON'T YOU REMEMBER THE PARTY AT THE SMITH'S? YOU TRIED TO RIDE HOME ON THIS ROCKING HORSE
ALL I KNOW IS MY HEAD'S ON FIRE-FIRE-DON'T YOU HEAR ME-ON FIRE!
NEXT DOOR-
FIRE DEPARTMENT! HURRY---THERE'S A FIRE IN THE APARTMENT NEXT DOOR!
OKAY, LADY, WE'LL BE OVER
WE'LL PUT OUT THE FIRE, SIR
GOOF-THE FIRE IS IN MY HEAD!
FALSE ALARM! THE GENT'S GOT MORNING-AFTER TROUBLES. TURN OFF THE WATER AND SEND FOR BROMO-SELTZER
-A LITTLE LATER-
-GOSH, THE OLD HEAD'S CLEARING, THE SEASICK FEELING'S GOING, TOO. BROMO-SELTZER IS A WONDER WORKER
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Miss Alabama

Continued from page 11

"Hiding nothing, I came down from Hollywood to be married at a double ceremony, the whole thing being a mistake, as I am not going to be married at all."

She looked politely surprised, but no matter how she looked, my heart swooped from trapeze to trapeze and never before have I felt so jumpy over a strange girl.

"Where is the bride?" was her next question.

"The bride is in Hollywood. She is due to arrive today in a tri-motor plane with two pilots, the other couple and some wedding guests, all movie figures."

"YOU might tell me the names," she went on. "I am a reporter on the Calamex Sun. Who will marry whom and how prominent are they and why are you here without your bride?"

"My name is Andrew Tree, assistant to a motion-picture director in Hollywood, or Culver City. He is Henry Wing, very famous, and will wed Miss Margolies Adams, even more famous. I am supposed to marry Genevieve Mercedes, one of the silliest deals I ever got into."

"Supposed to marry her? Don't you want to?"

"Not this morning." I briefly sketched the occurrences of the night before and the reporter girl chuckled.

"I am only a new reporter," she confessed, "and I work for a small paper, but there should be a story here."

"I'll give you all the facts, names and dates and don't forget to mention Firebrand and Southern Love. What we want is plenty of publicity. Your name isn't Jones, is it?"

She said it was Marion Mayhew and nobody would ever have to wonder was she from down in Dixie.

Coming into Calamex, I decided to talk business.

"How do you like newspaper work?" I demanded.

"Fine. Of course, I'm still sort of green."

"They pay you about twenty a week?"

"Fifteen."

"How'd you like a good job in the movies?"

"I'd like it. Like any girl. But you shouldn't fool people."

"I'm not fooling. That sorehead little Peke of yours is a lucky dog, because through her we met and the result is I offer you a job in the studio, with a leading concern, salary one hundred dollars a week and commencing right now. This minute."

SHE turned a pair of beautiful and startled eyes my way and presently smiled. "You're joking."

"If you knew all the misery we went through trying to lay hands on a Miss Alabama, you'd know I wasn't joking. You are a natural Miss Alabama."

"But I know nothing about acting."

"In this first job, you don't have to act. You just look. In the story, the Alabama character has to win a beauty contest and that's down your alley, because you really could win one. I may get you as high as one-fifty."

It took a little sales talk but I could see the excited look in her eyes, and when we rolled into Calamex I asked her to drop me at the hotel, having a strong desire to shave and look nice. This she did and then went along over to her newspaper to turn in the romantic news story of the double wedding.

Within a half hour, she was back in the rusty sedan and my first chore was to hunt up this marrying justice. We discovered him splitting wood and agreeable to anything, a nice old boy with a red nose and no hair. Was he all ready to pull off a fast matrimonial job? He was. What about licenses? Okay and leave it to him. I said the plane would be in shortly with the customers, and after that we motored over to the airport, where I found that the nearest blimp was in Phoenix and not available for private marriages, as the government was using it. The blimp feature seemed pretty goofy to me, anyhow.

"Now back to town," I suggested. "I'll have to talk to the chief."

We tore in through the dust, stopped at a drugstore and she waited while I called up Culver City.

"Is Henry Wing there?" I asked the studio operator.

"Just a minute."

The minute rushed by and I heard the familiar tones of the boss. He said or rather grunted: "Hello."

"Andy talking. Everything is arranged and all set, except about that blimp. I think you'll have to forget the blimp."

"Listen, you," said Henry and I could tell by his voice he was having one of his sour days. "Where are you?"

"I am in the little border town of Calamex, the Gretna Green of the movies, as ordered by you last night. I got the marrying justice, but no blimp."

"Andy," said the boss, "get on a train and come home."

"What was that?"

"I said get out of that town. We're making motion pictures in this studio, in case you forgot. We're starting Southern Love, if we can ever get all the paid employees together."

"What about the double wedding, Mr. Wing?"

There was the low rumble of my chief in distant profanity, a pastime at which he excels. There was further sound, as if he were tearing the instrument into shreds.

"You can't take it," he said finally. "You're one of those Hollywood softies or cream-puffs. Double wedding! You fill your delicate hide with a few of my drinks and then go plumb nuts and wind up in Mexico. . . . Don't come to any more of my parties."

"Aren't you going to be married?"

"No," he yelled, and I could have heard him if Bell hadn't invented telephones.

"You said—"

"Will you quit arguing with me! Be back here tomorrow or a new boy will have your locker."

"All right, Mr. Wing," I replied cheerfully, "and I may say the trip is not a wasted one. I have important news. Down here in Calamex, I stumbled on a real Southern girl for Miss Alabama, and we can forget Mercedes. This one comes from Mobile and is beautiful beyond words, with positively the finest figure you ever saw. She has lovely eyes and a perfect Southern drawl and the sweetest smile."

I went on a while, telling him details.

"Just a minute," he shouted. "You're all right, are you?"

"All right?"

"I mean not plastered."

"No, sir. This girl is the perfect ideal for that part. Wait till you see her."

He asked a number of quick questions and as he knows I am nobody's fool when it comes to selecting people for our pictures, he said all right on the deal.

"Bring her along," he snapped, "but get back here at once."

WHILE I was in the store, it occurred to me to have a short chat with the other prospective bride, so I put through a courtesy call for Miss Genevieve Mercedes.

"Hello, Andy," said a tired voice, not at all like the gay young gazelle of the night before.

"There was some talk," I said, "about a couple of weddings down here in Calamex. How about?"

"Andy, please," said she. "I don't feel well today. You must be all mixed up, as nobody is going to be married."

The click that followed had to me a soothing sound and I rejoined my beautiful chauffeur, who looked politely interested.

"Been talking to Mr. Wing," I said. "You have a job, officially. You are Miss Alabama, so go ahead and resign this newspaper thing. That makes me think. The wedding story is a complete floppo, as Mr. Wing is not going to marry Miss Adams today."

"It's in the paper by this time."

"We can't help that. Will this car of

Philbert

By FRANK OWEN

Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

"Philbert's going with the laundry. He needs a bath!"

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yours hold together from here to Culver City?"

"I still can't believe it," she said.

When the Calamex Sun came out, there it was plastered all over the front page, with vivid pictures of people being married in a blimp and photographs of Miss Adams and my boss. It took Marion a half hour to resign and another to pack, and just before we began rolling for California I stood beside the car door and stared at her.

"I'm glad you're going," I announced, "for two reasons. First, I know you'll click and the second will astonish you."

"I'm astonished already."

"Yes, but this *is* something and don't yell or faint. The very minute I saw you this morning, I fell in love with you. Hope to drop dead. You believe in love at first sight?"

"I do not," she said, very firmly.

"I didn't either, until today. Believe it or not, when I saw you step from this car and begin about the dog, that instant I fell head over heels in love with you and it's the first time any such thing ever happened to me."

She was looking flushed and startled, so I reassured her.

"You don't have to do anything about it, as I know it's sudden. Just let it stand a while. I simply thought I'd tell you. Anyhow, we're going to Culver City, you, me and the Peke and that's the main item, for you will at least be in the same town, whether you like me or not."

She broke into a slow smile and that was enough for me. We loaded up with gas and oil and started on what was to be a quick run from Calamex to the studio, but that was no quick run. Twenty miles west of Calamex, we blew a tire. Stop number one. Thirty miles farther, a gasket began hissing. Number two. After another tire blew, I bought a couple.

"It's a good thing you have a new job," I remarked, "for now you can buy a new car."

Toward midnight, we drifted into a town called Pelican and our engine resigned, so we decided to stay overnight, be repaired and start anew. There was an auto camp, so everything was nice and respectable, and the next morning our garage man tackled the engine and my ready cash melted fast. I put in a call for Mr. Wing, meaning to ask for money by wire. What a morning!

"Hello," I said, "Mr. Wing?"

There was no chance for any conversation about money or anything else.

"You're fired," he yelled, without warning. "You're the biggest stumblebum idiot that ever lived. Don't come back to the studio and never come near me again, or I'll smack you."

I was surprised, but said: "Mr. Wing, what about Miss Alabama?"

"You can both go to the devil," he told me, hanging up with those words, so there I was in Pelican with my beautiful protégée, no cash and out of employment. The latter didn't fret me, as every studio in town knows Andy Tree.

I DECIDED to say nothing to Marion, and telephoned Joe Gulick for fifty, which arrived by wire and we waited for the garage man to wind up. And while sitting in the sun on some old fenders and chatting lightly with Marion I learned why I had been discharged so abruptly. The Los Angeles papers came in.

The double wedding was going good in the papers. Apparently, it had leaped clear around the world on the wings of the telegraph and I could see why Henry was perturbed. Heading the items was one where it said our studio had a contract with Margolies Adams that forbade her to marry anyone, and so the studio officials were sore, the papers said, and were about to cancel the star's contract and sue her for one million damages. That was the beginning.

Over in London, England, Mrs. Henry Wing stated to the reporters that without any doubt she would act to have Henry arrested for bigamy if he so much as married Miss Adams and that was the first anyone knew of Henry having a wife. "Mr. Wing," his wife announced, "might at least wait until he is divorced."

That was that. As for our Miss Mercedes, the dark-haired extra gal, it appears she had been lying all the while about her age, and in Duluth her indignant mamma declared she would at once bring charges of abduction and kidnaping against this Andy Tree. Decorating these choice items were photographs of all concerned and even my mug was stuck in a corner. Nice work.

"That thing seemed to get around awful quick, didn't it?" I said to Marion Mayhew. "It may change my plans a trifle. Of course I can get a new job the minute we return."

"New job?"

"Mr. Wing discharged me this morning. He's in a temper."

"Then maybe I'd better go back to Calamex."

"You're going on to California, fame and fortune. Trust old Andy."

THE mechanical wizard fixed us up, we started again and when we arrived in Hollywood I drove straight to the palatial hacienda of Miss Margolies Adams, for whom I have done a great many kind deeds in six years. I knew her when she was an extra. Fortunately she was at home and greeted us with a sardonic smile.

"The little boy has been out getting us all some publicity, hasn't he?" she opened up.

"Yes," I said, "and fired as a result. That is not the point. I want you to meet Marion Mayhew, a Southern girl and a perfect type for Miss Alabama. The boss is so sore, he wouldn't even look at me, so I was wondering."

"What?"

"If you would take Marion over to the studio and introduce her to Mr. Wing, saying nothing whatever about either Calamex or Andy Tree."

"You bet I will," answered our famous star, who never liked Mercedes anyhow. I told her how I had discovered Marion, but didn't care for any credit, and after a social chat, I went on home to sneak a little sleep. I was in bed thirty minutes when the telephone rang. Mr. Wing was calling. "What in the devil are you doing in bed?" he demanded in his familiar tones. "Why aren't you over here?"

"You said I was fired."

"Never mind what I said. You take everything too literally, you and your weddings. Be over here as quick as you can get here."

When I walked into his office, he was in one of his beaming moods.

"You certainly raised hell," he began, "and you better cut out drinking from now on. Every paper in the world carried that junk, and the front office was fit to be tied. Still, we got some publicity for Firebrand and the new one."

"I'm back on the job?"

"Certainly, and see if you can behave yourself. Here's another thing. You don't need to bother about that girl you found for Miss Alabama. I don't want her. I have a Miss Alabama."

"Who dug her up for you?"

"Nobody. I dug her up myself."

"Who is she?"

"Her name is Mayhew and she's a peach. She's taking a test now, and she's exactly what I want for the role. Understand. I want you to see she gets all the breaks, as she has possibilities. She may get somewhere."

"Yes, sir," I said earnestly. "I'll try to see Miss Mayhew gets all the breaks."

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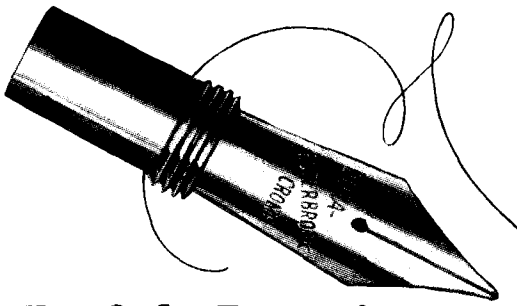

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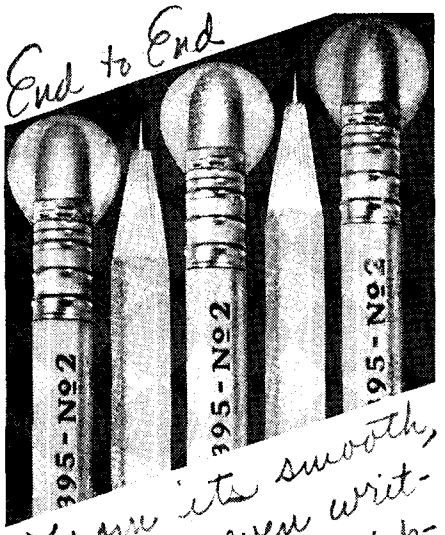

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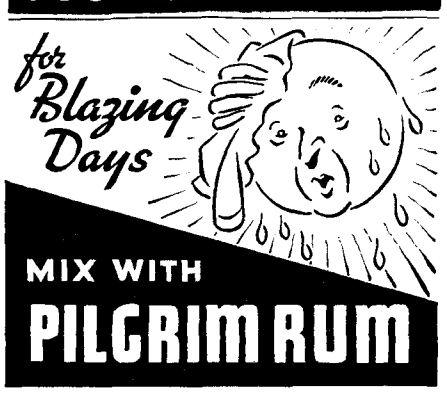

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The Barber of Bantua

Continued from page 19

either side. Mr. Martin, just off the bridge and with covered epaulets, waited for Captain Delanty to speak; and he noticed Ottorino Pascal in his white jacket, with his pointed beard silhouetted plainly against the horizon's gleam. They looked solemn, but not unduly sad. For they knew the doctor for a friend who had lived out his life ripely among them, and this was a thing they did because he had wished it so. Captain Delanty pulled at his cheek and lifted his shoulders. Then in a low voice which was barely audible, and without opening the black book in his hand, he said the words he had somehow learned. When he was done he looked about him for a moment, and then at his second officer.

"That is all, Mr. Martin," he said simply.

The second officer nodded and made a slight gesture. The two sailors stepped up, tipping the hatch cover. And it was in that moment that some unaccountable impulse stirred in Ottorino Pascal. The weighted shape plunged over and out of sight. The sound of its striking the water was lost in the steady whine of the wind and the hissing rush of the sea. But the barber's head came up. Erect, he turned to face the dawn. And they heard him—they all heard him distinctly!—as he spoke in a deep voice across the restless sea in some mysterious communion with that departed friend.

"I swear!" he declaimed clearly in a rich bass monotone, "I swear by Apollo the Physician and by Aesculapius, that according to my ability and my judgment with purity and with holiness I will pass my life and practice my art!"

He went all limp after that, and without another word turned and went from sight.

IT WAS not until then that, looking up, Martin saw once more the woman in blue with the bright courageous eyes of a girl. She was standing on the main deck above him, close against the rail, half in shadow and half in light, with her dress in the wind. How long she had been there he could not know, or how much she had seen. But *she* would know what Otto meant. Harry Martin was certain of that. She did not lower her head. How proud she seemed, with her eyes on the distance, serene, untroubled, lovely.

He saw very little of her after that. Her name was Celeste, but he asked Ottorino nothing more. You didn't do that to a friend.

He was going along for an evening's gam on Otto's settee before turning in after his watch several afternoons later when Celeste rushed past in the alleyway and darted into the barber's shop ahead of him. He stopped short, wondering if perhaps he hadn't better let them alone. But he heard quick excited voices in there, and a moment later a quartermaster shot out with an anxious face. Harry stopped him.

"What's up? Anything wrong?"

"Passenger, sir. Doctor Thaddeus, I think. I found him at the foot of the after ladder. Cold as a turkey, sir. Fell down it, I guess, when she gave one of her dandy rolls. Lucky he didn't get washed overside. I hauled him into the barber's place. It was handiest. Doctor Spear is . . . well, you know, sir, he . . ."

"Told Captain Delanty?"

"I'm on my way now, sir."

He went off quickly. Mr. Martin pursed his lips and stepped quietly into Otto's shop. Doctor Thaddeus was stretched out on the extended chair as if about to be shaved, and Otto was bending over him. He noticed clumps of snowy hair on the deck, and that the crown of the doctor's head had, indeed, been shaved. He could not see the barber's face. But he sensed at once a complete and startling transformation in that man. There was excitement in his lowered eyes. He was taut, intense, and his amazingly thin and delicate fingers moved with quick precision, touching the skull and moving on with deft certainty. The reclining form lay quite still, with a marble-white face, and if it breathed at all with life it was not perceptible. Celeste stood against the far bulkhead, pale and upright, one hand at her throat, her eyes glued on Ottorino Pascal. In the stillness her labored breathing was very plain. Harry opened his lips but closed them without saying a word. It was the girl who was the first to speak.

"Otto," she asked softly, "Otto, is he dead?"

He looked up quickly, as if the sound of her voice had startled him back to reality. He shook his head. "The skull is fractured." He touched it lightly with one finger. "Here."

"He . . ."

Otto shrugged his shoulders stiffly just as Captain Delanty came in with a troubled look.

"What is it: what is it?" Then, at sight of the deathlike pallor of the man outstretched in the barber's chair: "Good Lord!" He stepped up quickly, peered down, and then up, frowning darkly. "He's—"

"No, sir," Otto interrupted. "He is not dead yet. There is a pulse." He went on in a dull monotone: "Respiration slow and irregular. In plain words, Captain, the skull is fractured. If you look . . . here . . . you can see it. It presses on the brain. Complete coma. The pressure should be relieved at once."

The barber's fingers, pointing downward, trembled. Captain Delanty looked at him. He, too, sensed something strange about the barber of the Bantua. He made a half turn for the passageway. "I shall run for Colombo," he said decisively.

"How long?"

Otto's crisp two words brought the master up short. "About four days' steaming."

"He will be dead."

CAPTAIN DELANTY eyed him sharply. "One other chance then," he bit off. "We met a British cruiser day before yesterday. They have surgeons on board. I will get hold of her by radio. Meet her again in thirty-six hours. She—"

"He will be dead," Otto repeated.

Captain Delanty eyed him again from under his bushy brows. Celeste took a step forward. Harry alone noticed it.

"Otto," she said, "you could try . . ."

"Why should I?" His voice was icy and bitter. "Why should I?" he asked again. "I am a ship's barber; nothing more. I can try. Yes. And if I fail, I am again a murderer. . . . No! I will do nothing."

"Do you know anything about surgery?" Captain Delanty demanded.

"I am the ship's barber," Otto said flatly.

Celeste turned a pale and agitated face toward the shipmaster. "That is not true." She spoke slowly and very quietly. The quality of her voice showed a terrible restraint. "I . . . I have every faith," she went on firmly, "every faith in his skill. I demand that you allow him—order him!—to operate. I will sign your log book to that effect if you wish. If you do not I shall hold your owners strictly to account for the death of my father!"

"But what in the world can I do, Miss? If he—"

"I demand it!"

There was a moment of silence. Outside, the southwest monsoon poured past the swinging ship, and the noise of it and the sea was loud and strong. Otto was staring fixedly before him. Harry couldn't help a surge of admiration for the girl. She stood slim and erect with flushed cheeks, waiting. Captain Delanty coughed.

"What do you say, Otto?" he growled.

After a pause the barber nodded without turning his head. "Leave me the key of Doctor Spear's cabin. I will need his instruments and a trepan if he has one. Ask the chief engineer to come along. What I haven't got he will have to make for me. A seagoing engineer can make anything, even surgical instruments. When I am ready, Captain, for God's sake get the ship before this weather and keep her . . . keep her steady."

THE skipper went out. Harry brought a cargo light and rigged it above the barber's chair. Otto was right about the chief engineer. He turned out on his lathe below what was wanted, what looked to Harry like a small bowl of lignum-vitae which, inverted, fitted the patient's skull perfectly. It had a little steel drill through its center to lift the fractured bone and hold it in its place. Harry was there when it was done, and Celeste, and no one else. And they stood, one on either side of the chair in the fierce downflung glare of a cluster lamp, waiting for the ship to steady.

Otto worked in quick, nervous movements now, sterilizing instruments in boiling water and watching a little alcohol flame with narrow and gleaming eyes. His hands no longer trembled. Every nerve and muscle of him was rigid. Fascinated, Harry watched that transformed man doing things with a sure and positive skill. Celeste watched him too, but there was something else in her eyes, something elusively tender and strong and enduring. Otto said things too, short jerky words that dropped like stones from his lips.

"Harry . . . stand by. Celeste . . . the pulse. Let me know. . . . All ready."

He bent down. Celeste watched him. Harry could see them both with fascinating clarity in that lurid light, an unforgettable thing. Momentarily Otto's head came up. His eyes met the girl's. In a flash Harry thought of that evening in the Sunda Strait and the jest Ottorino had made that was something more than a jest: about the man he hated most in the world. If this was that man, helpless beneath his hand, he could take his vengeance now with absolute impunity! Harry felt a constriction in his throat. He wanted to cry out, the thought was so compelling, so terrible. He searched the barber's eyes for that hate, and he knew he saw it lurking there. The girl saw it too, perhaps. But she made no sign. Her eyes on Otto's were calm, untroubled, full of quiet faith. And in that single instant Harry Martin saw that lurking hate on Pascal's face vanish, replaced by something he had never seen before but readily recognized. One clear bright flame that bared the barber's nature—and disappeared at once. The girl's voice sounded low and throbbing, a bare whisper.

"I swear," she murmured, "I swear by Apollo the Physician and by Aesculapius . . ."

That was all. Nothing more. Otto's eyes widened. Then his head lowered. He said nothing. His fingers went about his work with painstaking delicacy and

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in utter silence. Except for the labor of his breathing. Harry could see the throbbing pulse along a bulging neck cord, and the pound of blood at the temple of the man with intently bowed head.

How long he was in there he could never tell. All he knew was that he had been privileged to witness a thing it would never do to talk about. And he never did. But mostly he remembered the face of a woman alight with some inner strength as she watched a ship's barber do a thing beyond the understanding of ordinary men. That, and the look of utter exhaustion on Otto's face when at last he drew erect and, sagging, merely nodded his head.

"I think," he gasped, "I think it will be . . . all right."

Harry went out after and left them alone. He found he had to. And the ship rushed on through the darkness.

It wasn't until just before midnight when Harry came on deck for the middle watch that he saw Celeste again. She was standing against the rail in moonlight with the shadow of sailing clouds ranging the ship's deck. He went up to her and asked her how her father was. He felt he had to hear her voice again, that was all.

"He asked me to tell you, Mr. Martin," she smiled, "the very first chance I got that you were right about the Sunda Skipper. He says it seems the story is true, after all. I . . . I don't know what he meant. But he says you would understand."

Harry grinned. "It's just a sailor yarn, Miss Thaddeus. Just a sailor yarn. Otto . . . ?"

Her face lit up at once with that girlish and virginal brightness. "He—well, you may as well know, Mr. Martin. Dr. Pascal, ten years ago, was one of the best young surgeons in the East. There was an infant he allowed . . . to die. It was horribly malformed. He says he would do it again today. Perhaps he is right, and perhaps he is not. I do not know and I will not judge. A man must decide such things for himself. But it was my father, Doctor Thaddeus, who pressed the case and had him disbarred from medical practice for it." She hesitated for a moment. But Harry said nothing. What was there he could say? "I have been waiting," the girl went on simply, "I have been waiting for him ever since."

HARRY only nodded. It was all he could do in answer to such an enduring fidelity. But before he turned away, he remembered those strange and compelling words he had heard twice that voyage, once from the lips of Ottorino Pascal echoing across an empty sea, and once from the lips of the girl beneath the cargo lamp's white glare. About Apollo and Aesculapius. They were such fine words. They seemed good to Mr. Martin, as good for a sailor as for any other man. He wondered about them, and he asked her what they were. She smiled again. Otto was coming along the deck toward her, and she looked at him with that light in her eyes before she replied in a soft murmur.

"It is just an oath, Mr. Martin. An oath men take to help them through a troubling time."

And the second officer of the Bantua nodded solemnly again and said good night, leaving them together there at the rail, full in the light of the moon, as he slowly climbed the bridge for the middle watch.

Cooking the Catch

Continued from page 16

oysters and call it fresh-water turkey. But the fisherman cooking his own seldom takes time for such chefs' tricks and hence is often disappointed, finding his pike more fun to catch than to eat.

But let's be realistic—probably all you'll catch is some perch which you'll be tempted just to throw in the frying pan and have it over. Don't do it! Plain frying can be as monotonous as recipes beginning with the classic direction: "Take a cup of fish." For our palate's sake try wine-poached perch. It's no trick at all. Simply put the cleaned fish in a pan, barely cover with dry white wine and poach gently under a lid close down on the pan. When done, take up carefully, remove skin, reduce the cooking liquor, add butter, nutmeg and lemon juice, pour over the fish and go to it.

Trout, Spanish Style

If you have the temperament you'll try them Spanish style for a change. Pick out one of the lesser fish of your catch, cut it up, put the pieces in cold water and bring slowly to a boil. Let it cook a good fifteen minutes, then take out all the fish and throw it as far away as you can. But be sure to save the rich liquor, for that, reduced to a tasty half-cupful, makes the incomparable flavor of this dish.

Clean the rest of the catch, remove gills, but leave heads on. Rub the inside of an earthenware dish with a crushed clove of garlic, salt and pepper the trout and lay them in the dish. Toss in a sprig of parsley, another of celery or a dash of celery salt, half a dozen peppercorns, a little lemon juice, half a cup of claret and the rich fish broth. Cover the dish and put it into a hot oven or over glowing coals. Baste several times. Blend a tablespoon each of butter and flour and drop bits of this mixture into the simmering sauce, shaking the dish gently to bring everything together. Then fish out the used-up peppercorns, celery and parsley and let hunger be your guide.

All boiled fish need added flavor, and for this the Europeans invented *court bouillon*, which is especially good for whitefish, weaks, haddock, carp and cod. First make a broth by boiling in three pints of water a chopped mash of one carrot, one onion, a small celery stalk, two sprigs of parsley and a bit of bay leaf. Add two teaspoons of salt and a dozen peppercorns. After boiling this bouillon for half an hour, strain and enrich it with a cup of dry white wine. When it boils up again it is ready to receive the fish and make them into something much tastier than Nature ever intended.

Never turn your nose up at codfish. If it's fresh out of the water, though, its flesh is too light and flaky; so to keep it from tasting as insipid as whiting or ling, it must first be made firm by the alchemy of wine, vinegar or lemon. But that's easy. Just slip a jigger of vinegar into every quart of water the fish is to be boiled in. And if it's to be baked simply soak it a couple of hours in a snappy mixture of lemon, white wine, sprigs of parsley, a little sliced onion and a clove of garlic. Then wipe the fish dry, stuff it with a mixture of chopped raw codfish, moistened bread crumbs, chopped onions, plenty of melted butter, minced parsley and the juice of one lemon. Make a bed of sliced bacon on the bottom of the pan, lay the fish in and blanket it with more bacon. Hollandaise or other egg sauce should accompany it, with maybe a sour note of mustard.

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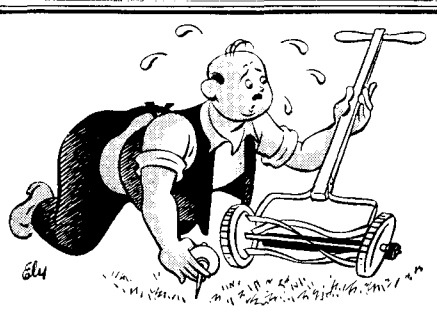

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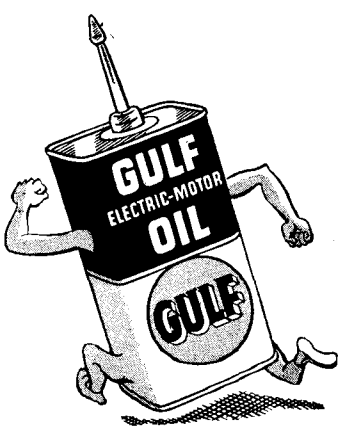

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Left Face

Continued from page 23

The whole thing reeked of revolution. At any minute, it seemed, street fighting must start.

And to think that it was under such revolutionary auspices that a Frenchman who, all his life, had been opposed to roughness and direct action and illegality, who had ever been noted for his cultured literary and philosophical tastes, who had invariably achieved his ends by use of the smooth tongue and the velvet glove, had just taken his place, for the first time, at the head of the French government! While café waiters, behind barred doors, played cards by candlelight, and striking salesmen and saleslgirls stood, in grim ranks, like sentinels, at the padlocked portals of department stores, Léon Blum, the first Socialist and the first Jew to become Premier of France, sat in nervous consultation with the nervous members of his Cabinet.

While Rumors Flew

Blum had become Premier as the result of the big victory, in the elections for the French Chamber, of the "Front Populaire," made up of Socialists, Radicals and Communists. He who had always preferred to work in the wings, leaving to others the limelight, had reluctantly consented to come to the front at last, as head of a government in which the Socialist Party, whose leader he had been for years, was supposedly the dominant factor. The Communists, though their votes had played an important part in the triumph of the Front Populaire, had refused to take part in the new government.

But they proceeded, without a bit of delay, to take a hand in running France from the outside—and they did it with such vigor that, within a few days of the advent of the Blum government, it looked to many as if France was in a fair way to become transformed from a democratic republic into a sort of Soviet dictatorship.

Though the strikes, which spread like wildfire all over the country, were largely spontaneous in origin, they were undoubtedly caused in part by Communist extremists; and the efficiency with which they were afterward organized and maintained was undoubtedly due to carefully laid plans of the Left extremists. The latter, more than any other factor, were responsible for the French legislature's hurried vote in favor of meeting the drastic demands of the strikers, among which the most sensational and far-reaching were the right of collective contract, the forty-hour week, paid vacations for workers and a new scale of minimum wages in certain branches of industry and business.

I saw Blum when he was in the thick of the battle for his political life.

Paris, after more than a week of strikes, was getting jumpy. Everywhere you heard rumors of coming violence. Processions of malcontents marched through the streets, singing the Internationale and shaking their fists. You kept bumping into squads of special police, grouped unobtrusively but ready for anything, at strategic points.

It was sizzling hot. Thoughts turned naturally to shower baths and sea beaches. But Premier Blum, far from being able to indulge in such cooling joys, spent his time dashing madly from the Chamber of Deputies to the Senate and vice versa, bent on insuring the passage, by France's perspiring legislators, of the revolutionary measures on which he was staking the existence of his regime.

Not noted for calm even under the most favorable weather conditions, he had reached, in that broiling temperature, a state of nervousness bordering on frenzy. As he sat on the front bench of the Senate, only a few feet from senators seeking to riddle his proposed reforms with bitter sarcasm, his long, thin fingers and arms were never quiet for an instant. He would stretch them out straight, convulsively pull them back, weave them into intricate patterns of gesticulation—or flap them about uncannily, until they seemed like the strange fins of some exotic fish.

Again and again, as he closely followed the tirades of each senatorial speechmaker, he would nod his head vigorously in agreement, or shake it furiously, in dissent, as if the matter were something quite personal, having nothing to do with anybody except the orator and himself.

The upshot of the whole performance was that those sensational measures of social reform proposed by the Blum government, in which conservatives see the germ of another French Revolution, were finally jammed through a distrustful but intimidated French legislature.

Léon Blum is sixty-four years old. His father, a ribbon merchant, belonged to a Jewish family which moved to Paris from Alsace—which accounts for its Germanic name. Léon was born in Paris in 1872, just after France's disastrous war against the Germans. That war had, as its aftermath, the seizure of power in Paris by the "Commune," which was smashed, after weeks of destruction and bloodshed, by the victory of the French regular army over the Communards, in a series of pitched battles in the city's streets.

In the quarter of Paris where Léon Blum was born—that of St. Denis—memories of those days of terror were still fresh during his boyhood. Many of the neighbors of the Blum family had fought on the side of the rebels against the regulars; and the lad's maternal grandmother, a woman of strong convictions and character, had been so friendly to the cause of the Commune, during its brief and bloody tenure of power, that she had become known to the rest of his relatives, conventional members of the French bourgeoisie, as "the Communard."

A Rebel from Childhood

She exerted a marked influence over Léon during the formative years of his early youth. This influence, together with the fact that the first schools which he attended were those of the St. Denis quarter, frequented by children among whose elders memories of the Commune were both vivid and venerated, played a considerable part in turning his mind to that ardent belief in socialistic doctrines which was eventually to make him the leader of the French Socialist Party.

From early youth he was a rebel. He was passionately opposed to injustice; full of restiveness when confronted with accepted rules, of intellectual curiosity when challenged by the unconventional.

From the schools of the Faubourg St. Denis he went to the Lycee Charlemagne, a well-known Parisian institution of education, where (he confessed in later years) he was so rebellious that he was saved from expulsion only because he stood first in his class. Next he attended that renowned breeding-ground of eminent Frenchmen, the Superior Normal School of Paris.

A literary bent had, meanwhile, developed in him. He yielded to it to such an extent that it looked for some time as if literature would claim him. He formed close friendships with men who afterwards became celebrated as French writers—Marcel Proust, André Gide, Paul Valéry. He wrote verses and essays. He dabbled in literary and dramatic criticism. And all the while the innate charm and politeness and consideration for others which have since elicited admiration even from his enemies became steadily more apparent.

Which Way France

A few weeks ago, just after Blum had become Premier, his old friend André Gide told this characteristic story about his student days:

The two of them, Blum and Gide, were walking along the Boulevard St. Michel, that Parisian thoroughfare sacred to the dreams of youth, deep in a vehement literary discussion.

"Molière is the greatest French dramatist!" shouted Gide.

"No, Marivaux is!" shouted Blum.

They were oblivious to all around them; with sublime disregard of consequences, they bumped passers-by or let themselves be bumped by them.

Suddenly, in the midst of eloquent argument and violent gesticulation, Blum stopped. He ran back a few paces to a shabby individual, whom he had just passed, and took a copy of an advertising handbill which the shabby one was pressing on those whom he encountered.

"Distributing those handbills is that poor chap's only means of livelihood," Blum explained apologetically, as he rejoined his comrade. "I am ashamed of myself for passing him without taking one. You see, if you accept one from him, it makes him feel less humiliated." That little anecdote makes it easier to understand what was meant by an old French nobleman, violently opposed to the leveling tendencies of our day, to everything new and socialistic, to everything that Léon Blum stands for, when he wound up a furious denunciation of Blum (who had just become French Premier) with the unexpected words: "But, after all, the fellow's an aristocrat!"

The turning point of his life came when he met the famous Socialist leader Jaurès in 1896.

From that moment the furtherance of Socialism became his principal aim in life. With Jaurès he founded, in 1904, the newspaper "L'Humanité," of which he was for years one of the principal contributors. At the outbreak of the World War he was made chief assistant to the Socialist Marcel Sembat, who was in the French Cabinet. Since 1919, except for short intervals, Blum has been a member of the French Chamber of Deputies. And, for a number of years, he has been commander-in-chief of the French Socialist party.

When the extreme leftists of that party broke away to form the French Communist party they took along with them the party paper which Blum had helped to found. He thereupon started a new one, the "Populaire," which has been since the official Socialist organ. He writes constantly for it. And now that he is Premier, the "Populaire" is being read by many Frenchmen who paid little attention to it before but now consider it a sort of official organ of the French government.

Léon Blum, who believes in the gradual socialization of France by legal means, who is convinced that capitalism, though dead, must be buried legally, was overwhelmed, at the outset of his premiership, by the believers in direct action, no matter how illegal it may be, whose votes had helped put him in

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power. He who had always stayed behind the scenes, pulling the strings to which other politicians danced, now stood forth in an atmosphere of undemocratic violence, which, to one of his tastes, must have been extraordinarily unwelcome.

"Do you consider the occupation by the strikers of the premises of their employers legal?" he was asked, when this form of class warfare was at its height in Paris and elsewhere in France.

"I do not!" he replied.

But he proceeded to grant the strikers' demands. What else could he do? The extremists were holding a pistol to his head. Practically everybody in France—the government, the legislature, even the employers whose factories and shops had been occupied—was opposed to the use of force in coming to a settlement.

Besides the smoldering trouble between capital and labor the Blum government is confronted with a financial crisis which, if handled wrongly, may become a catastrophe. And its apprehension as to what may be brewing against it at the opposite end of the political line-up from the Communists—the Extreme Right—was clearly shown by its recent attempts to dissolve the Rightist "Leagues," those semi-military organizations of which the Croix de Feu, under the leadership of Colonel de la Rocque, is the most famous and the most formidable.

From the moment of his accession to the French premiership Blum has been assailed with cries of "Kerensky! You are the French Kerensky!" That accusation has got under his skin.

No statesman likes to be compared with the unfortunate Russian who, desperately trying to give Russia a moderate democratic regime, after the collapse of the Russian Extreme Right (as typified by the Romanoff czardom), was ignominiously overthrown by the resolute, whole-hog, stop-at-nothing extremists of the Left, the Bolsheviki, under Lenin and Trotsky. Immediately after becoming Premier, Blum parried the sneers of "You're a Kerensky!" from the Leftist extremists of France by remarking: "Well, even if I am, my successor won't be a Lenin!" In those words he served notice on them that, if they went too far, they might bring to France not the dictatorship of the proletariat, like the one in Russia, which they wanted, but a dictatorship of their deadly enemies, the extremists of the Right, the French Fascists, like the regimes of Mussolini in Italy and Hitler in Germany.

It remains to be seen what will happen in France. Three possibilities loom on her horizon:

She may follow the example of Soviet Russia. She may go the way of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Or—alone among European nations whose regimes have been caught between Right and Left—she may triumphantly assert the democracy of her middle parties against both sets of extremists.

Which way France? That is the question.

And there is another: Will the government of Léon Blum solve French problems without more strikes? And without more "occupations" by strikers of factories and mines and department stores? And without more closing of Paris restaurants and confrontations of hungry Americans with the problem of where to get a bite of lunch?

Soil Savers

Continued from page 13

storms that sweep level, unprotected fields down to hardpan, but also rainwater run-off that strips slopes of topsoil, gullying as it races, and flooding creeks and rivers until they leave their banks, and either wash away thousands of acres or else deposit two or three feet of silt on arable land.

Guesswork has been eliminated, for when they enclose an area with sheet-metal fencing, the experts can measure the run-off of soil and water on the downhill side as accurately as a dairyman measures a pint of milk. At a North Carolina station, for example, they find that an acre of land in cultivated crops lost twenty-one tons of soil, while an acre in sod lost in the same period only five pounds. A Missouri study proved that land cropped continuously in corn lost twenty-seven per cent of the rainfall as immediate run-off. On another part of the same slope, planted in alfalfa, only three and one-half per cent of the rainfall was lost.

Soil has its types just as animals have their breed, and long ago the scientists of the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils developed classification to a point where they can tell just what an acre will or will not do in the way of crops; the Bureau of Plant Industry knows all there is to know about grasses, vine and other ground coverers, just as the Forestry Service knows about trees.

There is no detail that a Soil Conservation crew leaves untouched. For instance, studies are made to determine just what tree or bush should be planted in each locality, and as nearly as possible, the type indigenous to the region is restored. The same procedure is followed with respect to grasses, and in the forty-odd nurseries of the Service, seed experimentation has been developed to the point of an exact science. Most native grasses can be re-seeded, and will then take care of themselves, but now and again there are difficulties.

Buffalo grass, for example, nature's favorite covering for the Western prairies, does not re-seed itself, and the seeds are too small to be harvested by hand. One ingenious Service man, after much brooding, went over a patch of buffalo grass with his wife's vacuum cleaner, and so successfully did the idea work out that a number of machines have been built on the carpet sweeper principle. Hitched on to the back of small cars they have already sucked up more than 700,000 pounds of seed for distribution.

Not only are trees, shrubs and grasses furnished free to the farmer, but some thirty thousand workers, furnished by the WPA, plant them under Service direction. Seed, lime, fertilizer and innoculating materials are also provided by the good Mr. Bennett for all land taken out of cultivation, and as noted, the CCC helps out on check dams. Acceptance of soil erosion as a distinctly national problem is the justification of these federal expenditures in money and man power.

There is also the added consideration that the farmer lends himself and his land to a vast demonstration experiment for a definite length of time. In return for benefits, he binds himself to carry on with the Service map for a full five years, maintaining terraces and dams, strip cropping and contour furrowing as directed, keeping pastures where pastures are indicated, following out the plan of crop rotation, guarding his woodland against fire, and in all other things holding to the soil conservation program without change or neglect.

Making Old Man River Behave

As a consequence, the work is sinking down its own roots, taking the firm hold that will permit it to flourish of its own vitality. That is Mr. Bennett's hope and plan. In the back of his head, and not so far back at that, is the idea that the farmers of the nation themselves must take over the job eventually, although with government ever ready to advise and assist.

In talking over his work, Mr. Bennett is at pains to make clear that the Soil Conservation Service busies itself only with land that *can* be saved. With respect to land ruinously eroded, he turns his thumbs down, insisting on its retirement from cultivation. According to his figures, about 450,000 families are "tillers of the subsoil," living on submarginal acreage. Various federal agencies are dealing with the problem, notably the Rural Resettlement Administration, which proposes removal to other and better land, and the Biological Survey that has bought a million and a half acres for wild life restoration and conservation.

The states themselves are showing signs of activity, particularly New York. In 1931, the sum of $20,000,000 was set aside for the purchase and reforestation of ten million acres of submarginal land, and due to the closing of miles of highway and scores of school districts, it is expected that these savings will eventually take care of the purchase price.

A vast undertaking, this job put on the shoulders of Mr. Bennett and his fellows, and even more important than was at first imagined, for at every turn the work of the Soil Conservation Service is found to have intimate bearing on seemingly unrelated problems. Take irrigation and power development, for instance. Topsoil, carried away by rivers, dumps its silt in reservoirs, eventually compelling abandonment.

There is also the vital matter of flood control. It is now seen that dams, levees and revetments can only minimize flood hazards as long as tons of silt and sand and gravel are permitted to pour into streams and river beds. Flood control must begin at the crest of the ridges, extend down the slopes to the streams, and then to the great trunk rivers. Of the 300 million tons of soil swept away by the Mississippi every year, two thirds sweeps on into the Gulf, but one third stays right in the channel, choking it up until the river cannot and does not remain within its banks.

As a matter of truth, the enthusiastic Mr. Bennett links up his work with almost every known problem. Here, for example, is how he dilates on its social and economic implications: "The deterioration of the land means the decline of social structures, forced migration, abandonment of farm lands, and the undermining of community life. Taxes cannot be paid from impoverished fields. The burden must shift to those who can pay. Education cannot flourish in communities hard-ridden by the poverty of the land. Nor can industry easily sustain the continuing loss of farm markets, one after another, as the land dies. Capital investments in farm land reach into the billions. Life insurance companies, banks, railroads, factories, the entire financial and industrial structure of the country, is inextricably involved in the need for maintaining the productive capacity of our crop lands."

Up to date, no voice has been raised in dissent, and Republicans and Democrats vie with one another in claiming credit for the program.

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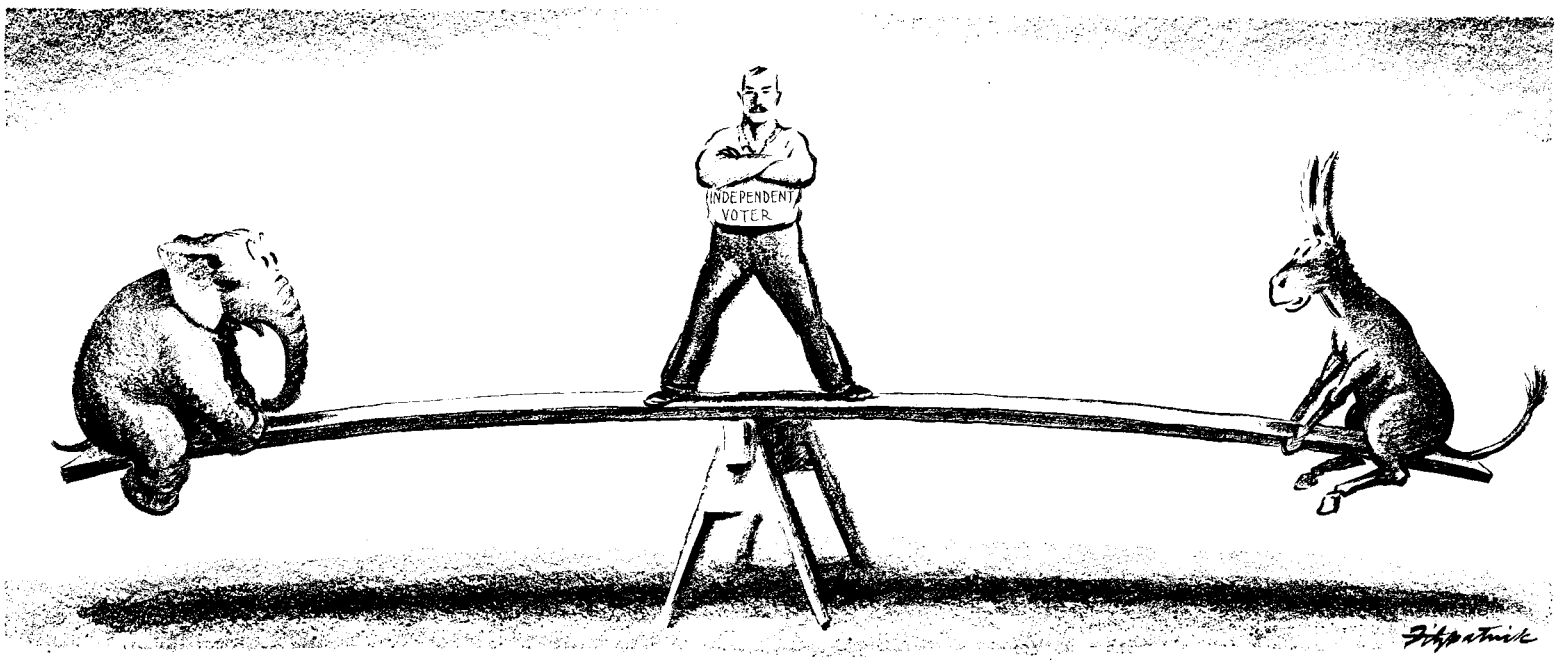

The People's Chance

PLAIN people, not politicians, are going to decide this year's election. Every now and again it happens. This year provides one of those rare occasions. Several million Americans, young and old, male and female, are going to express their preferences at the polls regardless of political organizations and previous voting habits.

These independents are not all on one side of the fence. Between now and November 3d a majority of them will undoubtedly have moved one way or another. For the moment they are undecided and neutral. Open minds are numerous this summer.

Eight years ago the country seemed to be completely Republican. Herbert C. Hoover got more than 21;000,000 votes against 15,000,000 for Alfred E. Smith. Four years ago Franklin Delano Roosevelt got nearly 23,000,000 votes against not quite 16,000,000 credited to Mr. Hoover.

In 1928 Alfred E. Smith was badly defeated. The Republicans had 444 electoral votes against 87 for the Democrats. Four years later President Hoover was routed when only 59 electoral votes were cast for him against Mr. Roosevelt's 472.

Yet in defeat Alfred E. Smith and Herbert C. Hoover each polled between fifteen and sixteen million votes. Emotional Democrats wept over the death of their party when the 1928 votes were counted. Lugubrious Republicans more recently have been the tear shedders.

The Calamity Janes are always wrong. No party which seems to have an irreducible minimum of not less than 15,000,000 supporters can be dead or even mortally sick. Yet when they were most disastrously beaten both Republicans and Democrats had such great armies of loyal supporters.

An army of at least seven million American voters are virtually free of binding political ties. They have voted during the past two presidential elections as their emotions and judgments inclined. They will exercise the same discretion this November.

Not all of this independent vote, however, will be effectual. In many states, in most of the Southern states and in a few of the New England states, partisan majorities are so large that the independent vote is swamped.

Some of the Southern states have never voted Republican in a presidential election since the end of the Civil War reconstruction period. Five—Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia—went Republican in 1928 when Alfred E. Smith was the Democratic nominee and prohibition was the issue. Four years later, however, they again went Democratic. Old habits were re-established.

Most of the New England states have been steadfastly Republican. Massachusetts teetered over into the Roosevelt column in 1932 by a very narrow margin. By an even smaller plurality Alfred E. Smith won the electoral votes of the state. Rhode Island was Democratic also during those campaigns but the other New England states clung to their Republican traditions.

Voting in these unreconciled New England and Southern states is still tacitly decided by Civil War cleavages and traditions. The electoral votes of the majority of the states are determined by more recent issues.

The actual numbers of independent votes required to turn an election in numerous states is surprisingly small. A plurality of 17,192 in 1928 was more than sufficient to give Alfred E. Smith Massachusetts' 18 electoral votes. President Roosevelt's Massachusetts plurality was only 63,189. Less than 1,500 votes put Rhode Island in the Democratic column in 1928.

When eight years ago five Southern states voted Republican, the popular pluralities were very small. A switch of 25,000 votes would have been more than enough to have changed the electoral votes of Virginia. No more would have been required to have swung North Carolina, Florida, Texas or Tennessee. Small pluralities determine state votes under our electoral system.

We may safely assume that this year both major parties will succeed in mobilizing the full forces of their armies of regular voters. Confirmed Republicans and Democrats will go to the polls and do their voting in the regular way. The independents are the uncertain quantity.

This year more than ever the independents are certain to disregard party lines in making their selections. Many who generally have been counted as Republicans will undoubtedly go Democratic. Senator George W. Norris of Nebraska is typical of these foot-loose Republicans.

Many of the conspicuous Democrats who this year are opposed to their party's principles are restrained because they live in Southern states which are predominantly Democratic. Others, however, reside in actually doubtful territory where independence counts. The hostility of these latter will be more important in determining the election than will be the philosophical opposition of such men as Senator Carter Glass of Virginia.

Middle Western and Middle Atlantic states will be the territory within which the hardest battles will be fought. Both parties must concentrate their arguments and their appeals upon the voters who are in fact open to arguments. Politicians and other forecasters guess in accordance with their sympathies but nobody really knows how the independents are tending.

Events of the past four years have raised problems for which there are few precedents in this country. New allegiances have been established and new irritations have been created. The voters must consider questions for which there are no stereotyped answers.

Political questions are decided generally more by feelings and group loyalties than by the more thoughtful methods of scientific inquiry. This campaign year we may hope that calm and honest argument will be offered to all who will listen. The number of those open to argument may be unexpectedly large.

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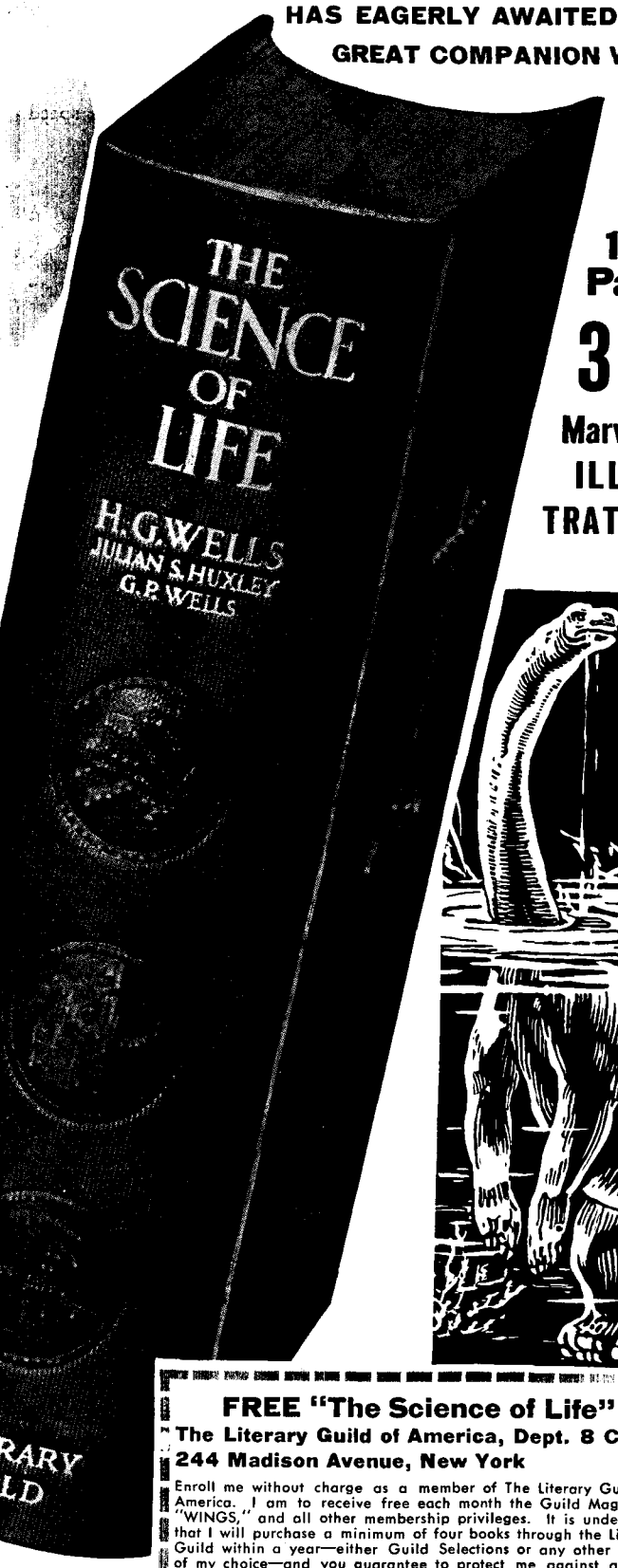

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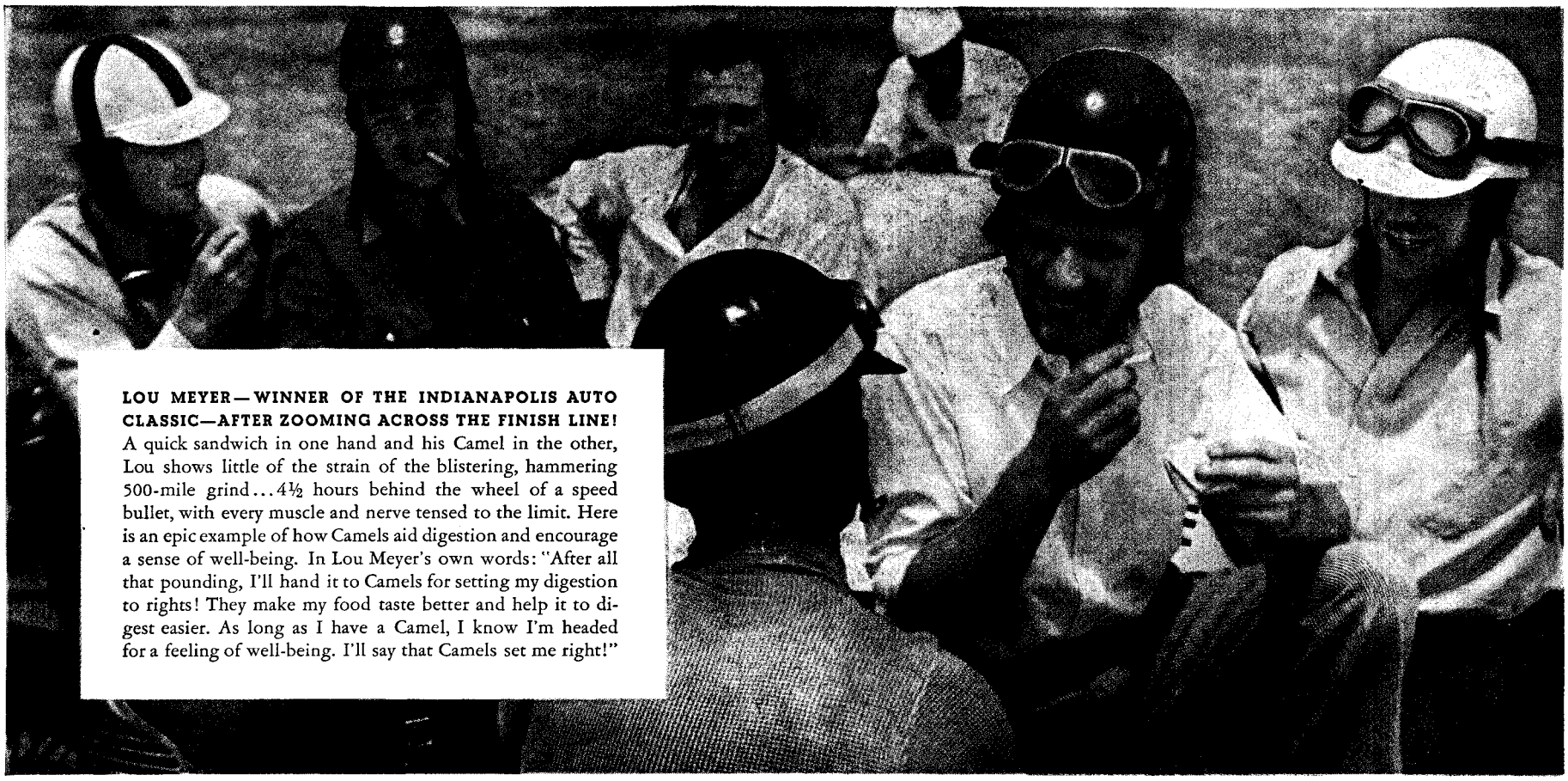
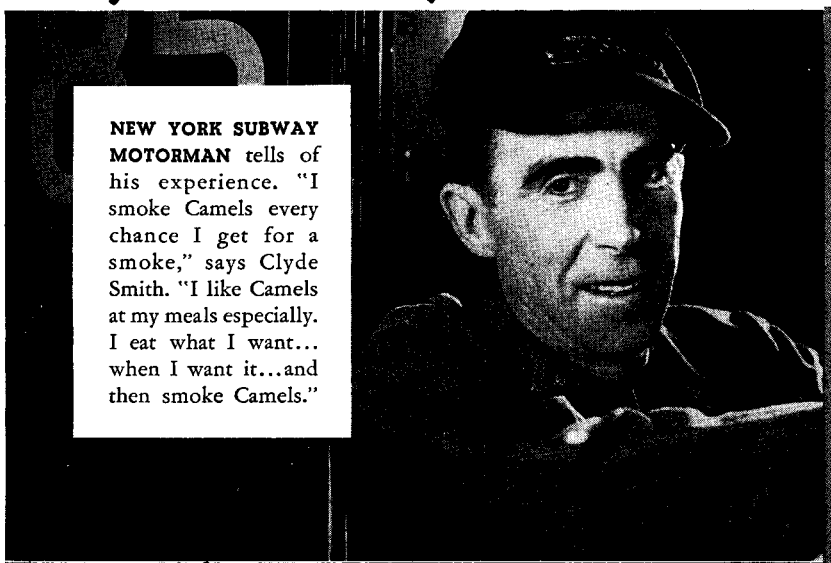


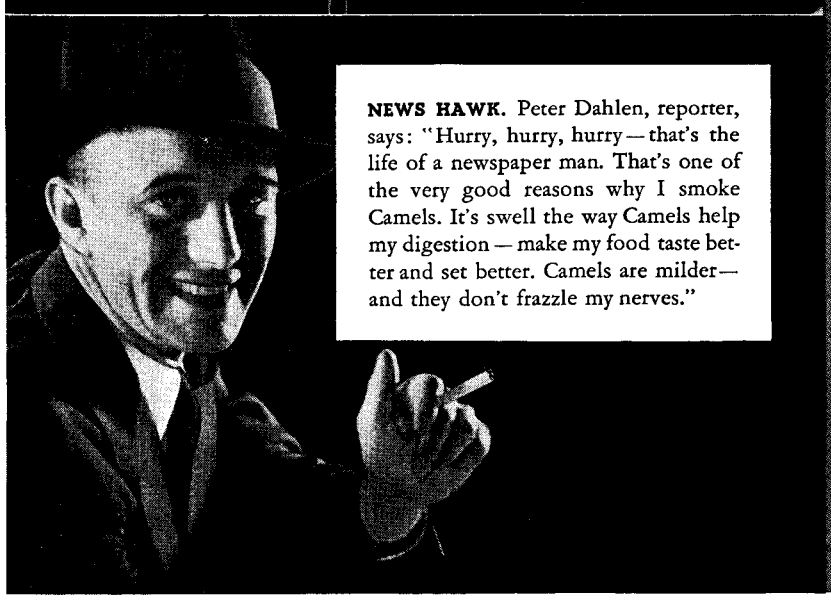
LOU MEYER—WINNER OF THE INDIANAPOLIS AUTO CLASSIC—AFTER ZOOMING ACROSS THE FINISH LINE! A quick sandwich in one hand and his Camel in the other, Lou shows little of the strain of the blistering, hammering 500-mile grind...4½ hours behind the wheel of a speed bullet, with every muscle and nerve tensed to the limit. Here is an epic example of how Camels aid digestion and encourage a sense of well-being. In Lou Meyer's own words: "After all that pounding, I'll hand it to Camels for setting my digestion to rights! They make my food taste better and help it to digest easier. As long as I have a Camel, I know I'm headed for a feeling of well-being. I'll say that Camels set me right!"

OTHERS HAVE FOUND THAT GOOD DIGESTION AND A SENSE OF WELL-BEING ARE ENCOURAGED BY CAMELS...SO

"—for Digestion's Sake—Smoke Camels"



NEW YORK SUBWAY MOTORMAN tells of his experience. "I smoke Camels every chance I get for a smoke," says Clyde Smith. "I like Camels at my meals especially. I eat what I want... when I want it...and then smoke Camels."



NEWS HAWK. Peter Dahlen, reporter, says: "Hurry, hurry, hurry—that's the life of a newspaper man. That's one of the very good reasons why I smoke Camels. It's swell the way Camels help my digestion—make my food taste better and set better. Camels are milder—and they don't frazzle my nerves."

Good digestion and good feeling, helpful allies for every one, promoted by smoking Camels

It's the experience of Lou Meyer that, even after terrific strain, digestion goes along more smoothly when he smokes Camels. People in every walk of life... men and women...agree that Camels ease strain and encourage digestive well-being. Camels set you right!

This is a fact you may discover yourself. Smoke Camels at mealtimes. The enjoyment of smoking Camels is followed by increased flow of the digestive fluids...alkaline digestive fluids ...so necessary to proper nutrition.

Mild, fine-tasting, refreshing Camels add to your enjoyment at mealtime or at *any* time! Make Camel your cigarette. Firmly packed—no loose particles. Camels never tire your taste or get on your nerves. They bring a cheery "lift" when you need it most.

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